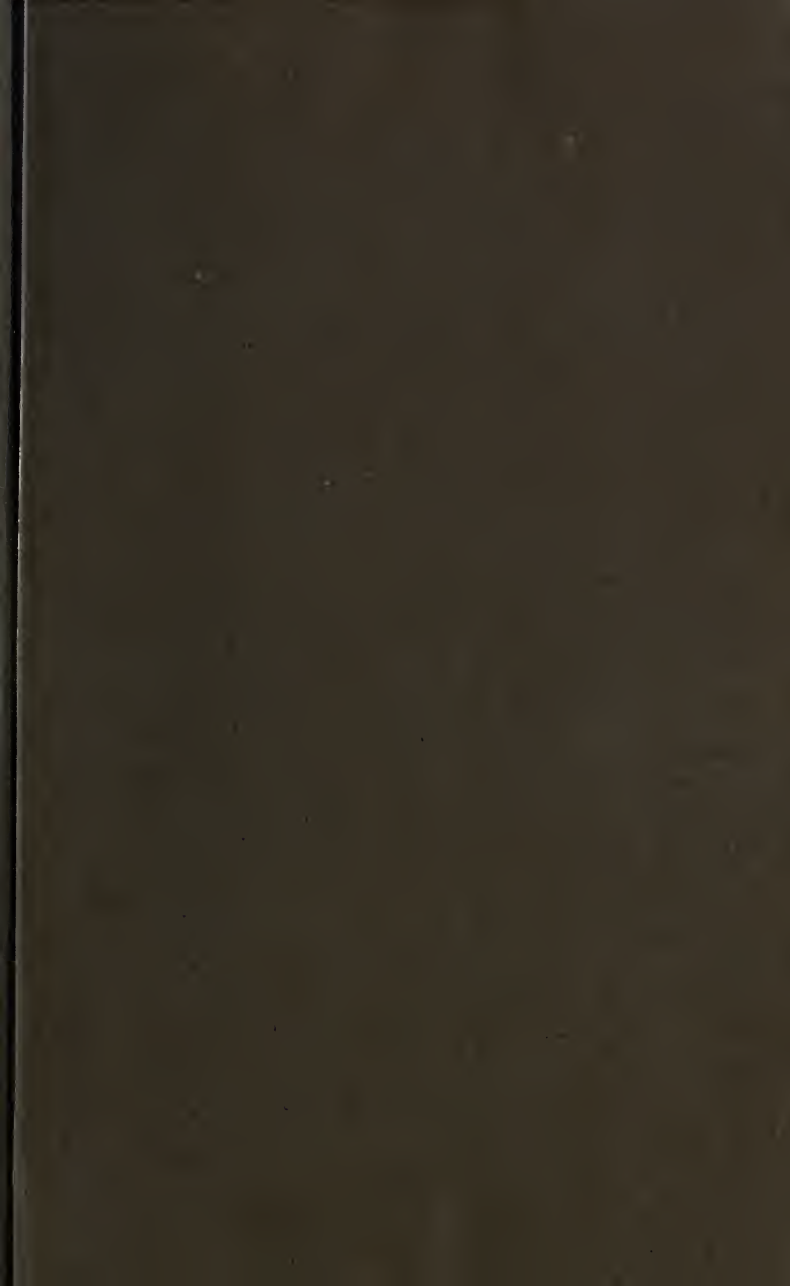


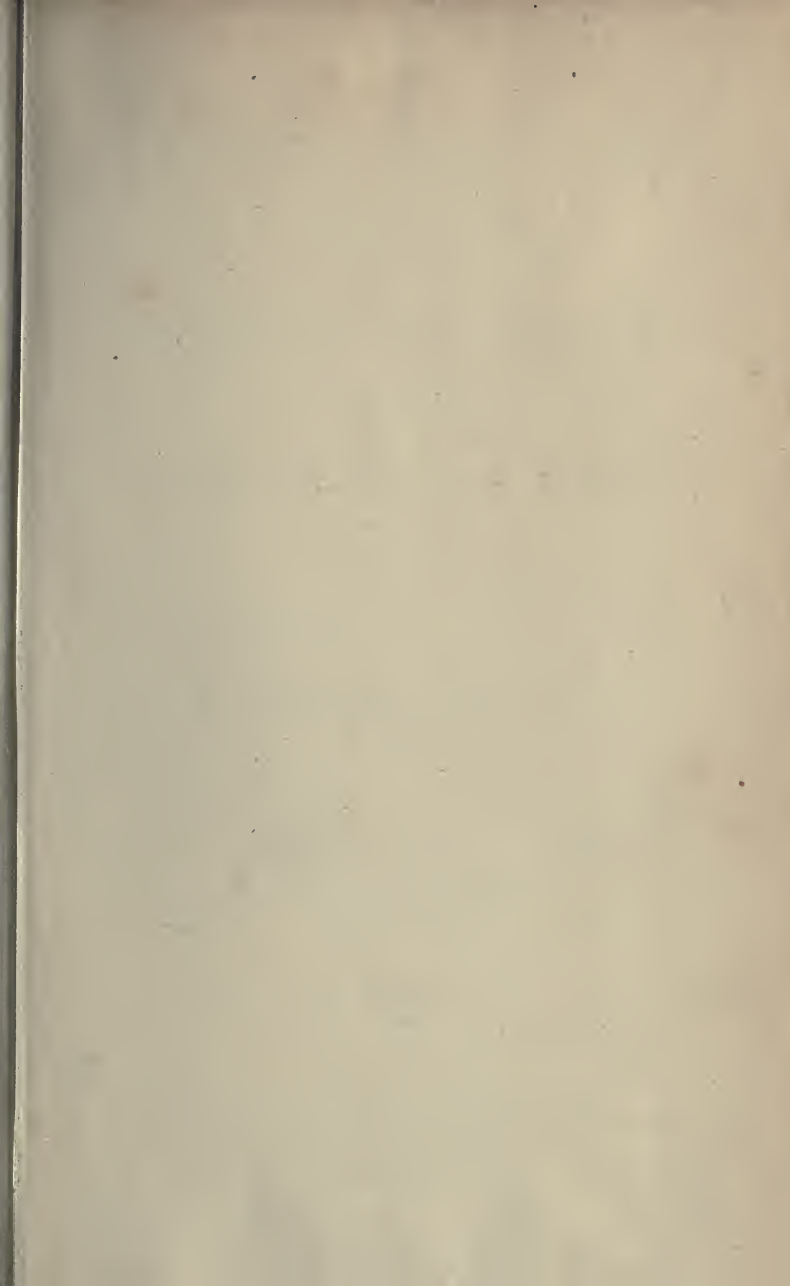
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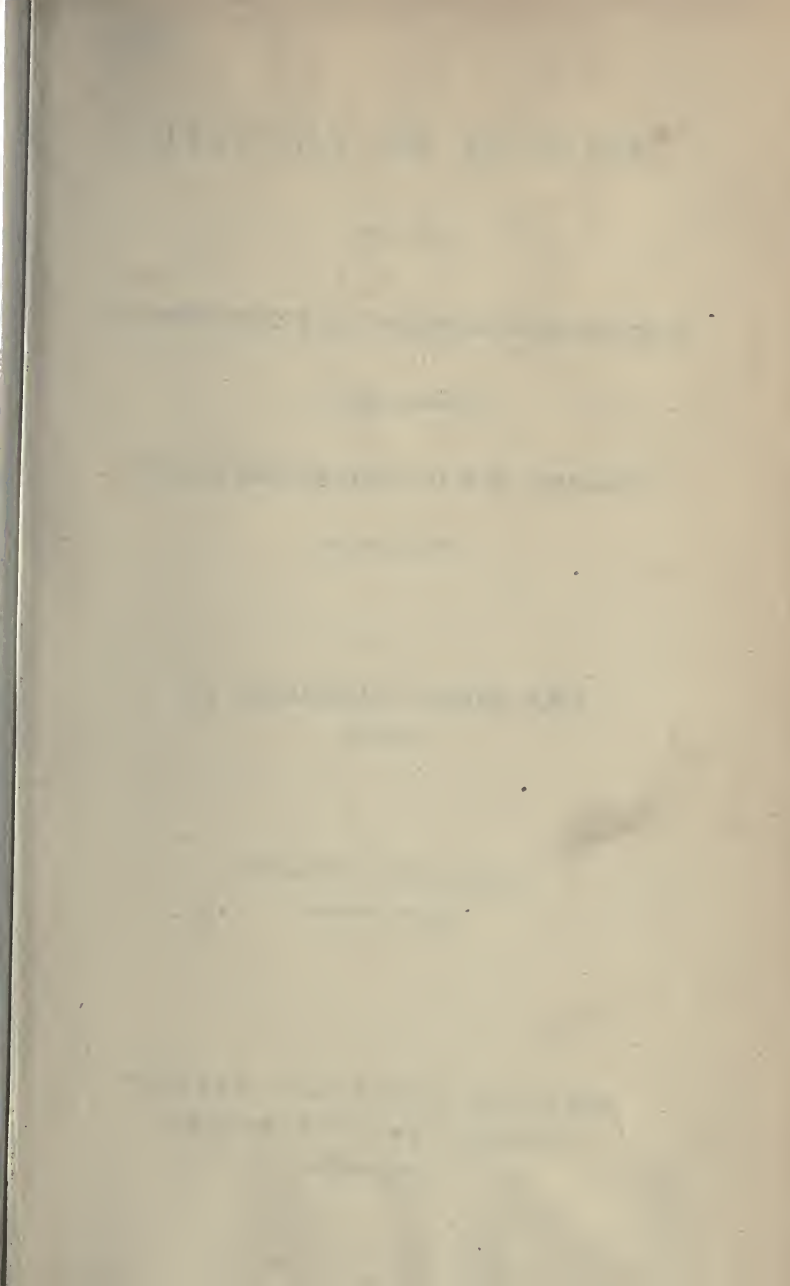


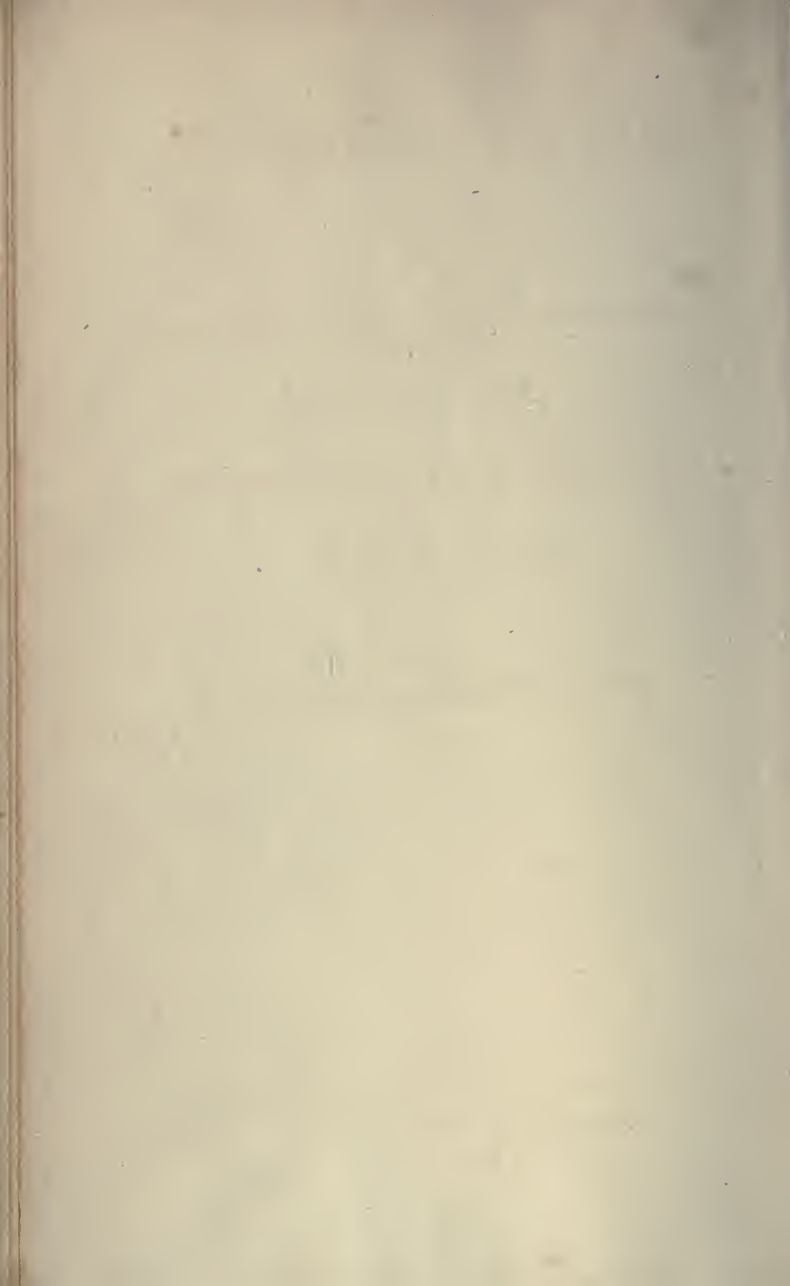
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HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO THE RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN M.DCCC.XV.

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HISTORY OF EUROPE.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

EUROPE IN ARMS AGAINST FRANCE.
NOV. 1813—JAN. 1814.

THE astonishing results of the campaign of 1813 appeared more fully when the crash of arms was over, and the alternations of hope and fear no longer distracted the mind from the contemplation of the revolution which it had effected. When the campaign had terminated—when the remains of the Grand Army, mournful and defeated, had wended their way across the Rhine, and the once triumphant Peninsular hosts, refluxed through the passes of the Pyrenees, had finally abandoned the fields of Spain—the magnitude of the change was such, that it seemed beyond the power of any earthly forces, how great soever, to have effected. Little more than three months had elapsed, since four hundred thousand French, flushed with recent victory, were grouped round the fortresses of the Elbe; while two hundred thousand, proud of their expulsion of the British from the plains of Castile, were prepared to maintain on the Tormes or the Ebro the dominion of the Peninsula. Of this immense host, not more than eighty thousand had regained the left bank of the Rhine, and hardly as many remained to arrest the invader on the Adour and amid the Pyrenees; the remain-

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1.
Prodigious
results of the
campaign of
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der had sunk under the sword of the enemy, wasted away under the horrors of the bivouac and the hospital, or were shut up, without a hope of escape, in the German fortresses. The few who had regained their native land bore with them the seeds of contagion, and a sadness of feeling, which rendered their presence a source of weakness rather than of strength to their suffering countrymen. The vast and splendid fabric of the French empire had disappeared like a dream. Its external influence, its foreign alliances, had vanished; the liberated nations of Europe, amidst shouts of triumph and songs of gratulation, were crowding in arms to overwhelm its remains: and the mighty victor, reft of all his conquests, was left with no greater resources than the old monarchy of Louis, now nearly drained of its military defenders, to make head against so many iron bands, whom former wrongs had roused to resistance, and recent heroism led to victory.

2.
Approaching
trial of the
Revolution-
ary forces by
misfortune.

The forces of the Revolution had hitherto basked only in the sunshine of prosperity. So feeble and ill concerted had been the assault of the European powers in 1793, that even the tumultuary arrays which the fervour of the Convention had called forth, and the guillotine of the Committee of Public Salvation had retained at their standards, were sufficient to repel them; and the hydra, which might with ease have been crushed in its cradle, was permitted to grow up till it had encircled every monarchy of Europe in its folds. But the period had now arrived when this long career of prosperous, was to be succeeded by a still more striking train of adverse, fortune: when the forces of Europe, instead of being arrayed with France against England, were to be arrayed with England against France; when disaster, long-continued and universal, was to break in pieces the vast supremacy of former times; and when the iron was to enter into the soul, not merely of the sinking nation, but of every family and individual of which it was composed. This, then, was the real test of the strength and constancy of the Revolution. The time had come when the passions of success were no longer to animate, the blaze of victory no longer to allure; but when the stern approach of adversity could be met only by the inherent strength of heroism, or the willing sacrifices of duty.

The moment is interesting beyond any other which had occurred in the progress of the contest ; for the touchstone was now to be applied to the power, resting on the passions of the world, which had so fearfully shaken those which were based on the fervour of Heaven ; and France was to go through the ordeal from whence had issued the spirit which defended the ramparts of Saragossa, and the devotion which fired the torches of Moscow.

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Napoleon set out for Paris from Mayence early in November, and arrived at St Cloud on the 9th of that month. For the second time within the year, he had reached his capital defeated and forlorn, with his army lost, his power shaken, and his glory dimmed. But how disastrous soever the circumstances of his empire were, the energy of the Emperor was equal to the emergency. His first care was to convoke the Council of State ; and to them he made a candid and true statement of the magnitude of his losses, and the necessity of vigorous measures to avert the dangers by which they were threatened. To them also he communicated the terms—which will be immediately mentioned—on which the Allied Sovereigns at Frankfort had declared their willingness to treat for peace. The Council, consisting of the Secretaries of State, Talleyrand and Molé, implicitly adopted the views of the Emperor—which were in themselves obviously well-founded—that, in the emergency which had arisen, it was indispensable to have recourse to a dictatorship, and that vast sacrifices must be demanded of France. The Emperor set the first example of such a sacrifice, by ordering thirty millions of francs (£1,200,000) to be taken from his vaults in the Tuileries for the public service. He speedily, also, gave earnest of what he expected of his subjects, and of the dictatorial power he was about to assume, by issuing of his own authority, and without any legislative sanction, a decree by which thirty additional centimes, that is, nearly a third, was added to the land, window, and door tax ; the personal tax on moveables was doubled, and three-fifths were added to the excise duties and the salt tax. Although these additions to the taxes were plainly illegal, as wanting any legislative sanction, even according to the shadow of constitutional freedom which remained to

3.
Return of
Napoleon to
Paris, and
his first mea-
sures there.
Nov. 9.

Nov. 10.

Nov. 11.

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¹ Decree,
Nov. 11,
1813, in Cap.
x. 298. Fain,
MS. de 1814,
p. 1.

4.
General and
intense dis-
content
which was
accumulating
in France.

² Lab. ii. 3,
4. Cap. x.
2, 3.

France under the imperial regime, they were the only means which remained of replenishing the public treasury, which, from the cessation of all external requisitions, and the enormous expenses of the late campaign, was totally exhausted. The confiscation of the funds of the communities and the hospitals of the poor, decreed at the beginning of the year,* had not produced half the sum expected, as few purchasers could be found; and even what was got had been altogether drained away. Public credit was ruined; the three per cents were at forty-five; the bank shares of one thousand francs at three hundred and four; and no capitalist could be found in France who would advance the government five pounds.¹

But, however indispensable these illegal stretches might be to provide funds for the immediate necessities of the state, they were by no means equally acceptable to the nation; and the time had now come when the unparalleled disasters of the last two years, and the continual drain which the taxes and conscription had occasioned on the wealth and population of the empire, had produced a general feeling of discontent, which neither the influence of the imperial government could stifle, nor its terrors overawe. The feelings of natural affection had been subdued, and the woful destiny of the young conscripts concealed, so long as success attended the imperial arms, and the continued advance of the armies veiled from observation the sufferings of the soldiers. But when the victories of the empire were at an end, and the armies, instead of moving on to fresh conquests, were thrown back with terrific slaughter on their own frontiers; when no marshal's baton in distant prospect could allure the young conscript, but the gloom of the hospital, or the starvation of the bivouac, rose up in grim array to terminate his career in a few months; when relief from domestic taxation, and the means of foreign aggrandisement, were no longer to be attained by the advance of their conquering arms to hitherto untouched fields of plunder, but increase of burdens, and the prospect of themselves suffering from pillage, were imminent from the threatening hosts which were ready to pour into their territory;² the minds of the people were of necessity turned into a new direction, and

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxiv. § 76.

they became sensible of the real tendency and necessary effects of the imperial government.

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5.
Striking indications of it
in Paris.

A general feeling of horror, accordingly, especially at the conscription and the excise taxes, now became general in the community: the opinion spread widely that the war was endless, and its exhaustion insupportable; the unbending character and known ambition of the Emperor seemed to preclude all hope of a termination being put to it, save by the destruction of France itself: wishes in secret were formed for a change of government, as the only means of escaping from such a multitude of evils. Several pieces containing lines which might be applied to existing circumstances, were prohibited, in consequence, from being represented at the public theatres; defamatory couplets* were circulated, and eagerly received in society; and one in particular, found affixed in the Place Vendome to the pedestal of the column of Austerlitz, which then was adorned with the statue of the Emperor on its summit, had an inscription terribly characteristic of the feeling of the time. It bore, that if the blood which he had shed were collected together in that square, it would reach his lips, so that he might drink it without stooping his head.^{1†}

¹ Cap. x. 2,
4. Lab. ii.
3, 5.

It was not surprising that this feeling of horror should have pervaded the community of France; for the calamities which had now fallen upon the army, in consequence of the disastrous issue of the late campaign, were extreme. On returning to Paris, Napoleon had inserted a statement in the *Moniteur*, that the reorganisation of the army was rapidly advancing; that the marshals had received reinforcements to enable them to maintain impregnable the barrier of the Rhine; that the artillery had repaired its losses; the National Guards were crowding into the fortresses; and that all the efforts of the Allies would be

6.
Deplorable
state of the
army on the
Rhine.

* Such as, "Napoleon est mauvais jardinier; car il a laissé gélér ses grenadiers, et flétrir ses lauriers." The "Tableau Parlant" was prohibited at the theatres for fear of the application of the line, "Il avait autrefois fait des conquêtes, ce qu'aujourd'hui il ne peut pas."—See CAPEFIGUE.

† "Tyran! juché sur cette chaise,
Si le sang tu fis verser
Pouvait tenir en cette place,
Tu le boirais sans te baisser."

Another inscription in huge letters, was found in the morning affixed to the Tuileries—"Fonds à vendre—Pas cher—Fabrique des Sires."—CAPEFIGUE, x. 4.

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shattered against that bulwark of art and nature. But in the midst of all this seeming confidence, the real state of the army on the frontier was very different; and disaster, wide-spread and unparalleled, had overtaken the shattered remains of the host which had wended its way back from the Elbe. Though the country through which that retreat had been conducted was rich and cultivated, the season temperate, and the marches not in general of unusual length; yet the deplorable effects of Napoleon's system of carrying on war without magazines, or provision of any kind for a retreat, had reduced the troops to the most woful state of destitution. The first corps which passed along the road consumed every thing on its line, and within reach of the stragglers on either side, to the distance of several miles; and those which came after, as on the Moscow retreat, could find nothing whatever whereon to subsist. Magazines there were none, except at Erfurth, between the Elbe and the Rhine, a distance of above two hundred miles; and the supplies in that city only maintained the troops during the two days that they rested within its walls. During the fifteen days that the retreat lasted, the men were left to search for subsistence as they best could, along an already wasted and exhausted line. The consequence was, that they straggled from necessity over the whole country, and arrived on the Rhine half starved, in the deepest dejection, bearing with them the seeds of a frightful epidemic, which soon proved more fatal even than the sword of the enemy.¹

¹ Lab. ii. 3,
5. Cap. x.
237, 239.

7.
Terrible epidemic which
broke out
among them.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of the inhabitants of the left bank of the Rhine, who had hitherto known war only by its excitement and its glories, when they beheld this woful crowd, pouring back by the bridge of Mayence into the French territory, and spreading like a flood over the whole country. But their number was so considerable, that even the zeal and charity of the inhabitants, which were exerted to the utmost, were unable to provide any effectual remedy for their distresses. In the fortified towns, where the great mass of the fugitives, armed and unarmed, found a refuge, their situation, though at first superior, was ere long still more deplorable. The dreadful typhus fever which they brought with

them from the scenes of their suffering in the German plains, soon spread to such a degree among the exhausted crowds who sought shelter within the walls, that in a few days not only the greater part of the military, but a large proportion of the citizens, were prostrate on the bed of sickness. The churches, the hospitals, the halls of justice, the private houses, were soon filled with a ghastly and dying multitude, among whom the worst species of fever spread its ravages, and dysentery wore down attenuated forms to the lowest stage of weakness. Such was the mortality, that for several weeks at Mayence it reached five hundred a-day. The exhalations arising from so great a multitude of dead bodies, which all the efforts of the inhabitants could not succeed in burying, were such that they ere long poisoned the atmosphere, and spread an insupportable and pestilential odour through the whole city. The churchyards and ordinary places of sepulture being soon overcharged, and interment in coffins out of the question, from the multitude of dead bodies which abounded on all sides, they were thrown promiscuously into vast trenches dug in the public cemeteries, which were rapidly heaped up to a height exceeding that of the walls enclosing them. When this resource failed, they were consigned to the Rhine, the stream of which wafted them down, as from a vast field of carnage, to the German Ocean. Meanwhile, the shores of the Baltic were polluted by the corpses, which, borne by the waters of the Elbe, the Oder, and the Vistula, from the vast charnel-houses which the fortresses on their banks had become, told of the last remains and final punishment of the external government of the Revolution.^{1*}

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The internal administration of Marie Louise, as Regent, after the departure of the Emperor for the German campaign, had been sombre and monotonous, little calculated either to distract the attention, or dispel the increasing anxieties, of the people. She went through, with docility, all the external forms which were required by her elevated situation; and, incapable of apprehending either the duties or the perils with which it was attended,

¹ Lab. ii. 6,
7. Cap. x,
297.

8.
Great levies
of conscripts
in the autumn
of 1813 in
France.

* See *Tableau des Hôpitaux pendant la Dernière Campagne de Napoleon*. Par J. B. A. HARDE, Ex-directeur des Hôpitaux Militaires. Paris, 1815.

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Sept. 7.

Oct. 10.

¹ Decrees,
Sept. 7 and
Oct. 10, 1813.
Moniteur,
and Gold-
smith's Re-
cueil, vi. 517,
and 386.
Cap. x. 248,
249.

submitted with the same impassible temper to the unbounded flatteries with which she was surrounded, as to the fearful demands she was compelled to make on the blood of her subjects. In August, she obtained a temporary respite from the formal duties which oppressed her in the capital, by a journey to Cherbourg, where she had the gratification of beholding the last stone put to that vast construction, partly built, partly excavated from the solid granite, which, commenced by the patriotic spirit of Louis XVI., and continued by the unwearied perseverance of Napoleon, was destined to rival the noble harbours on the opposite coast, from whence the fleets of the proud Albion issued forth to give law to the waves. The feet of the Empress were the last which pressed the solid granite of the basin before the new element was let in. But sterner duties soon awaited her. Immediately after her return to Paris, she was made the organ by which the Emperor demanded a conscription of thirty thousand men from the Southern departments; and, a month after, another of two hundred and eighty thousand from the whole empire, which were immediately voted by the senate—in all three hundred and ten thousand. They were ordered to be taken in the following proportions: viz. one hundred and twenty thousand from the class attaining the legal age in 1814 and the preceding years, and the remainder from those reaching that age in 1815—in other words, who were *two years under* the legal age of nineteen to twenty-one. So vast had been the consumption of life in the French army, even anterior to the overthrow of Leipsic, in the disastrous campaigns on the Elbe and in the Pyrenees, and so fearful the inroads which the insatiable ambition of the Revolution had now made upon the blood and strength of the empire, that the military population of the proper age was exhausted, and additional troops could be raised only by seizing upon youths of seventeen and eighteen years old, hardly capable of bearing arms, and altogether unfit to withstand the fatigues of a campaign.¹

These ample supplies of men, however, were wholly insufficient to meet the wants of the empire, after the disasters of Leipsic had thrown them back behind the Rhine, and the invasion of Wellington had laid bare the

defenceless condition of the southern frontier. In the Council of State, the day after his arrival, Napoleon unfolded the danger of his situation with manly sincerity, and enforced his demands with nervous eloquence. "Why," said he, "should we fear to speak the truth? Has not Wellington invaded the south? Do not the Russians menace the north? What shame! and the nation does not rise in a mass to chase them away. All my allies have abandoned me: the Saxons betrayed me on the field of battle; the Bavarians endeavoured to cut off my retreat. Never talk of peace till I have burned Munich. The same triumvirate which partitioned Poland has arrayed itself against France: we can have no truce till it is defeated. I demand three hundred thousand men: with what remains of my armies, I shall then have a million of soldiers. Councillors, what we require is energy; every one should march: you are the chiefs of the nation; it is for you to give an example of courage. Every one speaks of peace; that word alone strikes my ear, while every thing around us should resound with the cry of war!"¹

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9.

Napoleon's
speech in the
Council of
State.
Nov. 10.

¹ Lab. ii. 8,
9.

On the day following the senate was assembled, and the demand on the Emperor's part of three hundred thousand men was brought forward by the orator of government, Fontanes, whose brilliant elocution and sounding periods were well calculated to throw a deceitful veil over the devouring requisitions of the Revolution. Napoleon's own words breathed a nobler spirit—"A year ago," said he, "all Europe marched with us; at present, it all marches against us: that is because the opinion of the world is formed by France or England. We should, then, have every thing to fear but for the power and energy of the nation. Posterity will admit that, if great and critical circumstances were presented, they were not above France and me." The levy required was decreed as soon as the project was presented: it was ordered to be taken, not, as in former cases, by anticipation from the young men who would arrive at the age liable to the conscription in succeeding years, but by *retrospect* from the classes who had undergone the ordeal of the conscription in former years, from 1803 downwards. Thus, within little more than two months, successive

10.

Decree ordering
a levy of
300,000 men.
Nov. 15.

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LXXXIV.

1813.

1 Decree,
Nov. 15,
1813. Moni-
teur, and
Goldsmith's
Recueil, vi.
544.

11.
Napoleon
resolves to
abandon the
line of the
Rhine.

2 Fain,
Camp. de
1814, 2, 3.
Lab. ii. 10,
11.

levies were demanded from the French people, now reduced almost to their ancient limits, of more than six hundred thousand men: an awful proof of the consumption of human life occasioned in their last stages by the wars of the Revolution. The change in the classes declared liable to the conscription is very remarkable. It indicates the consciousness of government of the arrival of the period when the dreadful destruction of life by the campaigns of 1793 and 1794, had rendered it impossible to draw additional supplies from the young men born in these or the succeeding years, and when it had become indispensable to recur to those who had come into being, before the revolutionary scythe had begun to sweep away at once the strength of one generation and the hopes of the next.^{1*}

Preparations to resist the dreaded invasion were immediately ordered by Napoleon. Engineers were despatched to the principal fortresses on the northern frontier, with instructions to repair the walls, arm the ramparts, fortify the bridges and passes, and make every possible preparation for a vigorous defence. But when they arrived there, and became acquainted, by ocular inspection, with the deplorable state and reduced numbers of the army, as well as the total want of any preparation, either in the way of magazines, provisions, or artillery, for putting the frontier fortresses in a state of defence, they were soon convinced that it was altogether impossible to think of defending the line of the Rhine. That great frontier stream, above five hundred miles in length, extending from the foot of the Alps to the sands of Holland, strongly studded with fortresses, presented, indeed, a most formidable line of defence, if guarded by three or four hundred thousand men. But it was altogether impossible to maintain it with sixty or seventy thousand soldiers, worn out with fatigue, depressed by defeat, with a frightful contagion thinning their ranks, and no magazines to replenish their military stores. It was resolved, therefore, to make no attempt to defend the frontier river, but to fall back at all points across the Vosges mountains.² But the Allies were not aware of

* Vide Ante, Chap. lxxiv. § 71 *et seq.*, where the effect of the conscription on the male population of France—a most curious and interesting subject—is fully discussed.

this resolution ; they were ignorant of the weakness and losses of the French army, and paused before the majestic stream which had so long been the frontier of their empire, when they needed only to have crossed it to have wrested from the enemy, without firing a shot, nearly a third of France.

Serious, however, as were the external dangers which menaced the empire, they were neither the only ones, nor the most pressing, which awakened the anxiety of the Emperor. The fermentation in the interior was still more alarming ; and it had now become painfully evident that the Revolutionary government, deprived of the stimulus of external success, was tottering to its fall. The correspondences of the prefects over all France at that period were very remarkable, and clearly bespoke the agitation and uncertainty of the public mind. The conscription in particular excited universal apprehension, extending, as it now did, not only to those who arrived at the legal age in the course of the year, but to those who had attained that age during the ten preceding years, and who had hitherto deemed themselves secure from further molestation ; while the enormous increase of the excise and assessed taxes, which practically amounted to more than a half, diffused universal consternation. The alarm on this last account was the greater, that these duties were now levied by the sole authority of the Emperor. Already the price of a substitute for the army had risen to four or five hundred pounds ; the last conscription at once doubled it, and in some instances as much as twelve hundred were given. Families of respectability spent their whole property, the savings of a long lifetime, to save their sons from destruction. It was universally understood, what in truth was the fact, that the purchasing of a substitute for the conscription, was bribing one man to sacrifice his life for another.

In proportion as the dangers of military service increased, desertion from the ranks of the conscripts became more frequent, and its punishment more severe ; the prefects were incessantly occupied in enforcing the laws with the utmost rigour against refractory conscripts ; —long files of them were every where to be seen marching along the roads to their places of punishment, with

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12.

Alarming fermentation and discontent in the interior of France.

i. Moniteur, Nov. 16, 1813. Lab.
ii. 10, 11
Cap. x. 250, 254.

13.

Extraordinary and increasing severity to the conscripts.

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¹ Cap. x. 250,
257. Lab. ii.
10, 11. De-
cree, Nov.
15, 1813.
Goldsmith,
vi. 545: and
Moniteur,
Nov. 16.

14.
Opening of
the British
Parliament,
and pacific
declarations
of the Prince
Regent.

Nov. 4.

haggard visages, downcast eyes, and a four-and-twenty pound shot chained to their ankles. Great numbers, especially in the mountain districts, driven to desperation by the alternative of such a punishment, or death in the field or in the hospitals, fled to the hills and formed roving bands, which subsisted by plunder, and already bade defiance to the gendarmes and local authorities. Alarmed at the accounts he received from all quarters of this growing disaffection, the Emperor adjourned the meeting of the Chamber of Deputies, which, by a decree, dated from Gotha during the retreat from Leipsic, stood summoned for the 1st December, to the 19th of that month, in the hope that in the interim the negotiations which had commenced with the Allies at Frankfort might have taken a favourable turn, and that he might be able to present some prospect at least to satisfy the universal desire which was felt for peace. At the same time, to prevent the general discontent from affecting the voice of the deputies, a decree was passed by the senate, vesting, in defiance of the constitution, the nomination of President of the Chamber in the Emperor, and prorogating the seat of such of the deputies as had expired, and required to be filled up anew, so as to prevent any new elections in the present disturbed state of the public mind.¹

While France was thus reaping, in the utter prostration of public credit, the entire exhaustion of the blood of the nation, and the universal anxiety which prevailed, the natural consequence of domestic revolution and external aggression, England exhibited at the same period a memorable example of the very opposite effects, flowing from a strictly conservative system of government, and affording a proof of the almost boundless extent of the resources, which a country at once orderly and free can develop, during the most protracted and arduous struggle. Parliament assembled in the beginning of November, and the speech from the throne dwelt with marked, but not undeserved, emphasis upon the extraordinary successes which had signalled the last memorable campaign, and concluded with the important declaration, "that no disposition to require from France sacrifices of any description, inconsistent with her honour or just preten-

sions as a nation, will ever be, on the part of his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, or his allies, an obstacle to the conclusion of peace." The address in answer, moved by the adherents of ministers, was agreed to in both houses without a dissenting voice; so wonderfully had the glorious concluding successes of the war stilled, both in the legislature and the nation, the furious passions which tore both at its commencement. Lord Liverpool, the prime minister, declared, that in considering the conditions of a general pacification, "It would be the policy of England to give full security, not only to her friends, but to her enemies; and that the cabinet would not countenance any demand from them, which, in their situation, they would not be willing to concede."¹

Though the language of government, however, was thus pacific, yet, like prudent statesmen, who know that the olive branch is in vain tendered with one hand, if the sword is not at the same time held unsheathed in the other, they not only admitted no relaxation in their warlike efforts, but made preparations for carrying on the contest on a still more colossal scale than in the preceding campaign. A hundred and forty thousand men, including thirty-one thousand marines, were voted for the sea service; the ships of the line in commission were ninety-nine; the total number of vessels of war, which in that year bore the royal flag, was one thousand and three, of which no less than two hundred and thirty-one were of the line, and six hundred and forty-four of all classes were in commission. The regular land forces consisted of two hundred and thirty-seven thousand men, and the regular militia of eighty-three thousand—all of which were obtained by voluntary enrolment; besides two hundred and eighty-eight thousand local militia, who were raised by conscription from the population of the British islands.*²

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¹ Parl. Deb.
xxvii. 22, 42.
Ann. Reg.
1813, 200,
201.

15.
Naval and
military pre-
parations of
Great
Britain.

² Parl. Deb.
xxvii. 86, 87
Ann. Reg.
1813, 202,
203.

* Sailors and Marines,	-	-	140,000
Regular Army,	-	-	237,000
Regular Militia,	-	-	83,000
Yeomanry Cavalry,	-	-	65,000
Local Militia,	-	-	288,000
Native Indian Army,	-	-	200,000
Militia in Canada,	-	-	40,000

1,053,000

—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech*, Nov. 11, *Ann. Reg.* 1813, 203; and *Parl. Deb.* xxvii. 86, 87.

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The land forces in India were two hundred thousand, and forty thousand militia in Canada were under arms, and actively and bravely engaged with the enemy ; so that England, in this, the twenty-first year of the war, carried on hostilities with in all ONE MILLION AND FIFTY-THREE THOUSAND MEN IN ARMS.

16.
Its whole
immense
forces were
raised by
voluntary
enlistment.

It is not the least surprising circumstance of these marvellous times that, with the exception of the local militia, which were embodied only for a few weeks in the year, and the persons composing which never permanently left their homes, the whole of this immense force was raised by voluntary enrolment. Three or four candidates were to be found applying for every vacancy in the Indian army ; and the casualties of the British army in Europe, which amounted to twenty-five or thirty thousand annually, were entirely filled up by enlistment, or volunteering from the regular militia—a system which had been attended with the very best effects, and which had yielded, in the last six years, no less than a hundred thousand admirable soldiers to the troops of the line. To extend and improve upon this disposition, a bill was passed early in this session of Parliament, authorising twenty-seven thousand men to be raised by volunteering from the militia, in one year ; a measure which, with the ordinary recruiting, which was taken at sixteen thousand, would produce at least forty thousand men to meet the wants of the approaching campaign. By such gentle means was the stupendous force brought together, which now carried on the war victoriously in every quarter of the globe, and with so small a consumption of life were the victories gained, which now shook to its centre the iron empire of France.¹

¹ Lord
Castlereagh's
speech, Nov.
11, 1813.
Parl. Deb.
xxvii. 86, 87.
Ann. Reg.
1813, 202,
203.

17.
Enormous
expense of the
year.

But this immense force could only be maintained by a proportional expenditure ; and, great as had been the financial efforts of Great Britain during the former year, they were yet exceeded by the colossal exertions of the present. The cost of the army alone, ordinary and extraordinary, rose to the enormous amount of thirty-three millions, besides four millions and a half for the ordnance ; the navy required nearly twenty-two millions ; and the interest on the national debt and exchequer bills, with the sinking fund, was no less than forty-three mil-

lions. The loans to Continental states were ten millions : eight millions were advanced to Ireland ; and altogether the expenditure of the year reached the enormous amount of ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEEN MILLIONS. The necessity of carrying on the war with the utmost vigour, at once by land and sea, both in Europe and America, from the coincidence of the near termination of the Continental with the commencement of the Transatlantic contest ; the vast expense of the campaign in the south of France, at the same time that the war was prosecuted by British troops in the Netherlands, and all the armies of Europe were arrayed in British pay on the banks of the Rhine, sufficiently explain the causes of this vast expenditure. Certainly no policy could have been so short-sighted, even in a financial point of view, as that which at such a crisis would have hesitated at straining every nerve to improve to the utmost the advantages already gained, and bring the contest to an immediate and glorious termination.¹*

But if it is easy to assign the causes of the vast expenses of the last year of the war, it is a very different matter to explain how the nation was able to bear it ; and in truth, of all the marvels of this period, the most marvellous is the way in which funds were provided by the British empire for the gigantic expenditure of the concluding years of the war. When we recollect that the finances of France, supported as they still were by the industry of forty-two millions of persons, and aided as they had so long been by the contributions levied from one-half of Europe, were at this period utterly bankrupt, and that it was only by the aid of the great reserved fund, the fruit of imperial smuggling, in the vaults of the Tuileries, that the most pressing demands on the treasury could be met ; we are at a loss to conceive how it was possible for the British empire, with a population not then, including Ireland, quite reaching eighteen millions, by any means to have raised the enormous funds which were annually poured into the public treasury. Yet no difficulty whatever was experienced in this particular. The permanent revenue for the year 1814 amounted to nearly forty-four, the war taxes to thirty millions sterling ; thirty-six millions were raised by loan, including

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¹ Budget for 1814. Ann. Reg. 1815, p. 342 ; and Parl. Deb. xxx. i. ii. App.

18.
Prodigious sums provided for the service of the year.

* See Appendix A, Chap. lxxxiv.

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1 Parl. Deb.
xxviii. 66, 67;
and xxx.
App. 2-5;
and Ann.
Reg. 1813,
34.

19.
General sur-
prise at this
extraordinary
financial
wealth of
Great
Britain.

that provided for Ireland; and the ways and means reached altogether the enormous sum of ONE HUNDRED AND ELEVEN MILLIONS, independent of above six millions, which were annually raised from the landed property of England for the support of the poor. But this marvel, great as it is, is much enhanced when it is recollected, that such was the unshaken credit and inexhaustible capital of Great Britain, that these prodigious loans were raised; in this the twenty-first year of the war, at the low rate of £4, 12s. 1d. of annual interest; and that even on these reduced terms, such was the competition of the lenders, and rise of the funds and scrip, at the time the bidding was going forward, that no less than a million of stock was thereby saved to the public—the lenders being inscribed for so much stock in the five and three per cents, and immense fortunes were realised to lucky contractors.¹*

The Continental writers, struck with astonishment at this growing and expansive power in the British finances, which no demands, how great soever, were able to exhaust, have generally concurred in referring it to the effect of the war itself, which secured to the English merchants the commerce of all civilised nations, and rendered London the centre of the wealth, not only of the British empire, but of the whole globe. English writers, equally amazed at this extraordinary phenomenon, have sought an explanation of it in the great addition which at this period was made to British industry, by the introduction of the steam-engine, and the vast improvements introduced into the machinery for cotton manufacture; and have repeated again and again the striking observation, that James Watt stood forth the real conqueror of Napoleon.† Without disputing, however, that these causes

* See Appendix B, Chap. lxxxiv.

† James Watt was the inventor of the steam-engine, and as such has deservedly acquired immortal renown. But so great and rapid have been the improvements effected by British genius on the application of that wonderful engine to the purposes of manufacture since that time, that it may be doubted whether subsequent mechanical philosophers have not had as large a share as the illustrious Scottish sage in the production of the marvellous and complicated machinery which now sustains the vast fabric of British manufacturing industry. Among the authors of these improvements, the chief place must be assigned to Sir Richard Arkwright and Samuel Crompton, Esq. The former realised a princely fortune from his inventions; the latter, to whom the cotton manufacture is perhaps still more indebted, received a gift of £5000 from parliament, as an honorary mark of distinction for his services to his country. The result of these splendid inventions has been that in seventy years the cotton consumed

had a material effect in counteracting the influence of the many circumstances which, during the progress of the contest, had at various periods tended so powerfully to depress the springs of British industry, it may safely be affirmed, that the influence of this concentration of foreign commerce, and growth of manufacturing industry, has been much overrated, and that it is in other causes that the true solution of this extraordinary phenomenon is to be found.

The coincidence of the American Non-importation Act, passed in February 1811, with the exclusion of British commerce from almost the whole Continent by the Berlin and Milan decrees, had reduced the British exports to a most alarming degree in that year; and though the opening of the Baltic harbours by the war of 1812, and of those of Germany and the Adriatic by that of 1813, had a powerful effect in counteracting these causes of depression, yet the closing of the North American market, which took off, even at that period, manufactured goods to the amount of fourteen millions annually, had a most prejudicial effect upon every branch of industry. Neither the exports nor imports, accordingly, of 1812 or 1813, had equalled what they had previously been in 1809 and 1810; and those who are accustomed to refer the stupendous financial efforts of Great Britain at the close of the war, to the monopoly enjoyed at that period by British commerce, which has been since shared with other nations, or the vast recent growth of its cotton manufactures,* will

in the fabrics of Great Britain has increased from 3,000,000 lbs. to 500,000,000 lbs.; the persons employed in them have swelled from 60,000 to 1,300,000, and the official value of British manufactured cotton goods exported from Great Britain, which in 1751 was only £45,956, had risen in 1810 to £17,898,519, and in 1833 to the amazing amount of £46,337,210.—See BAINES' *History of the Cotton Manufacture*, p. 350—a most interesting and valuable work.

* Table showing the Population, Exports, Imports, and Tonnage, of the British Empire in 1811, 1812, and 1814, and in 1836, 1837, and 1838. Records of 1813 destroyed by fire:—

Years.	Population of Great Britain and Ireland.	Exports. Official Value.	Imports. Official Value.	Tonnage, British and Foreign.
1811, -	17,580,000	£28,799,120	£26,510,186	2,072,244
1812, -	17,830,000	38,041,573	26,163,431	Records destroyed by fire.
1814, -	18,000,000	53,573,234	33,755,264	1,899,535
1836, -	26,030,000	97,621,549	57,230,908	3,556,697
1837, -	26,360,000	85,781,669	54,737,301	3,383,965
1838, -	26,680,000	105,170,549	61,268,320	4,099,039

—PORTER'S *Progress of the Nation*, i. 11, ii. 98, and 174; and *Finance Accounts* for 1840; and PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*, ix. 43, 44.

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be probably surprised to learn that at that period our exports and our imports were not more than a third of what they have since become ; that our tonnage little exceeded a half of what it now is ; and that the population of the empire was nine millions less than the amount which it has attained at this time, (1839.)

21.
Real causes
to be found
in the heroic
spirit and
energy of the
nation.

The true explanation of this extraordinary and unparalleled phenomenon is to be sought for, not in any casual or accidental circumstances which at that period poured any extraordinary stream of wealth into the British islands, but in the industrious character of their inhabitants, the long protection from foreign aggression which they had enjoyed, the free and yet tempered spirit of their internal constitution, and the heroic spirit with which they were animated in the latter years of the contest. It is not any casual or passing advantage or monopoly, enjoyed for a few years by its merchants or manufacturers, which can enable a country to maintain a war for twenty years with the most powerful nations in the world, and in its concluding years spend from a hundred and ten to a hundred and twenty millions annually, without raising the rate of interest or exhausting its national resources. Centuries of pacific exertion, the accumulations of long-protected industry, the energy of a free constitution, the security of habitual order, an industrious national character, the influence of long-established artificial wants, and unbounded natural advantages, at once for agriculture, commerce, and manufactures, must combine to produce such an astonishing result.

22.
Combination
of many
causes which
produced this
result.

England had made good use of this extraordinary combination of advantages during the whole course of the contest. Her industry, constantly protected alike from foreign aggression and domestic spoliation, had flourished amidst the revolutionary devastation, or military oppression, of other nations ; her agriculture, keeping pace with the rapid growth of her population, had even outstripped the wants of the people, and for the first time, for nearly a century, had rendered the empire, in ordinary seasons, independent of foreign supplies of food ; while her commerce and manufactures, enjoying a virtual monopoly of

all the lucrative intercourse which the dreadful contest that was raging had left to mankind, though inconsiderable in amount to what they have since become, were attended in general with large profits, and occasioned a vast accumulation of wealth in a comparatively small number of hands. But though due weight is by no means to be denied to those concurring circumstances, they were not the most important causes which conspired to produce this extraordinary result: they merely brought to maturity the crop prepared by centuries of previous regulated freedom, protected industry, and natural advantages. And all these causes, powerful as they were, would have failed in producing the result, if they had not been aided at the decisive moment by a noble constancy in the government, and spirit in the people, which made them face difficulties, and undertake burdens which would have been deemed unbearable in any other age or country, and poured forth the long accumulations of British wealth in the cause of mankind, with a profusion which must ever render this the most glorious and animating period of British history.

While Great Britain and France were thus severally preparing for the final struggle which was to decide the great contest between Revolutionary and Conservative principles, the Allied sovereigns, assembled at Frankfort, adopted a measure which, more than any other, tended to elevate their cause in the estimation of mankind, and to detach from Napoleon the support of the French people. The Baron Saint Aignan, ambassador of France at the court of Saxe Weimar, had been made prisoner during the advance of the Allies to the Rhine, and in the first moment of his capture he had been received with marked kindness by Metternich, who assured him, in the most emphatic terms, of the anxious wish of the Allied powers, and more especially of his own sovereign, for a general peace. Five days subsequent to their arrival at Frankfort, the Allied leaders sent for the Count, and after again reiterating in person, in the strongest terms, their pacific inclinations, despatched him to Paris with a private letter from the Emperor Francis to his daughter, Marie Louise; and a diplomatic note from the whole sovereigns, in which they

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23.
Propositions
of the Allied
sovereigns
from Frank-
fort as to a
general
peace.

Nov. 9.

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1813.

¹ *Moniteur*,
Jan. 20, 1814.
Fain, MS. de
1814, 46, 57.
Pièces Just.

stated the terms on which they were willing to open negotiations. The basis of these terms was, "that France was to be restricted to its natural limits between the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees; that Spain should be restored to its ancient dynasty; and that the independence of Italy and Germany should be secured, under princes of their native families."¹

24.
Napoleon's
answer.

Nov. 16.

If these terms were agreed to, M. de Saint Aignan was assured that England would make great sacrifices, and would recognise every liberty of commerce and navigation to which France had any right to pretend, and that nothing hostile to the dynasty of Napoleon would be insisted on. To these propositions Maret replied on the part of the French Emperor, that "a peace concluded on the basis of the independence of all nations, as well in a Continental as in a maritime point of view, had been the constant object of his Majesty's solicitude," and he specified the city of Manheim on the right bank of the Rhine, which he proposed should be declared neutral, and made the seat of the negotiations. But he did not say whether or not the French Emperor would accede to the basis proposed, which omission was justly complained of by Metternich in his reply, as rendering nugatory any negotiation which might be commenced. To this Maret replied, that in admitting as the basis of the whole the independence of all nations, the French Emperor had in effect admitted all for which the Allies contended, and with this explanation Metternich professed himself entirely satisfied.*

Nov. 25.

Dec. 2.

Dec. 10.

25.
Noble de-
claration of
the Allies
from Frank-
fort.

Hitherto every thing seemed to augur well for the opening of the negotiation; and the better to express the views with which they were animated, the Allied sovereigns published a declaration, dated Frankfort, 1st December 1813, detailing the principles on which they were willing to treat with Napoleon, and the objects for which the alliance contended. The whole history of the world does not contain a more noble instance of justice

* Rapport du Baron Saint Aignan, 9th Nov. 1813. Note de Saint Aignan 9th Nov. Duc de Bassano au Prince de Metternich, 16th Nov. 1813. Réponse de Metternich, 25th Nov. 1813. Lettre de M. le Duc de Vienne au Prince de Metternich, 2d Dec. 1813. Réponse de Metternich, 10th Dec. 1813. All contained in the *suppressed Moniteur* of 20th January 1814, and given in FAIN, MS. de 1814, 46-57; *Pièces Justificatives*.

and moderation in the moment of triumph than is exhibited in this instrument. "The Allied powers," it declared, "desirous of obtaining a general peace on a solid foundation, promulgate in the face of the world the principles which are the basis and guide of their conduct, their wishes, and their determinations. They do not make war on France, but on that preponderance which, to the misfortune of Europe and of France, the Emperor Napoleon has long exercised beyond the limits of France. They desire that it should be powerful and happy—that commerce should revive and the arts flourish—that its territory should preserve an extent unknown under its ancient kings: because the French power, great and strong, is in Europe one of the fundamental bases of the social edifice—because a great people can only be tranquil so long as they are happy—because a brave nation is not to be regarded as overthrown because in its turn it has experienced reverses in an obstinate and bloody struggle, in which it has combated with its accustomed valour. But the Allied powers wish themselves also to be happy and tranquil—they wish a state of peace which, by a wise division of power, by a just equilibrium, may hereafter preserve their people from the calamities without number which for twenty years have oppressed Europe. They will not lay down their arms before they have attained that great and beneficent result; they will not lay them down till the political state of Europe is of new secured, till the immutable principles of justice have resumed their ascendant over vain pretensions, and till the sanctity of treaties has at length secured a real peace to Europe."¹

When sentiments so elevated and generous were promulgated openly by the conquerors, it might reasonably have been expected that the negotiations would have been immediately commenced by the French government; and certainly never was defeated monarch and nation invited in such a way to concur in the general pacification of the world. Instead of this, however, Napoleon by every art postponed the opening as much as possible; and six weeks after M. de Saint Aignan had been despatched with these pacific overtures, the negotiations had not even got the length of naming plenipotentiaries. The basis agreed to by

CHAP.
LXXXIV
1813.

¹ Declaration,
Dec. 1, 1813.
Ann. Reg.
1813, 442;
and Schoell,
Recueil, ii.
357. Monts.,
vii. 278.

26.
Napoleon's
devices to
elude accept-
ing these
terms.

CHAP.
LXXXIV.

1813.

Dec. 10.

Jan. 6.

Napoleon was accepted by the Allies on the 10th December, but the letter notifying their acceptance was not even answered by Caulaincourt on the part of France till the 6th January; and before that time arrived, the Rhine was crossed at all points, and the war carried into the French territory; and the negotiation, in consequence, only commenced at Chatillon at a later period of the campaign. In truth, Napoleon was desirous only to gain time to complete his defensive preparations in his own dominions; and nothing was further from his intention than to withdraw behind the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees. Although, too, the other Allied powers were really desirous of an accommodation, yet Alexander was strongly impressed with the idea—which experience soon proved to be well founded—that no real peace was practicable with the French Emperor; and that the wisest policy was to await the course of military events, and not fetter themselves by any engagements which might prove prejudicial, in the event of ulterior success in the great measures which were in preparation. Thus the negotiation which opened under such favourable auspices, came at this time to nothing; for this plain reason, that the views of the leaders on both sides were so much at variance, that the difference between them could be adjusted only by the sword.¹

¹ Metternich, to Caulaincourt, Dec. 10, 1813; and Caulaincourt to Metternich, Jan. 6, 1814. Fain, 57, 58. Danilefsky, Camp. de 1814, 2, 3.

27.

Opening of the Session of the Legislative Body, Dec. 19.

One reason why Napoleon went, in appearance at least, into this elusory negotiation, was in order to have the benefit of the statement, to lay before the Chamber of Deputies, who were summoned to meet on the 19th December, that negotiations were in progress, without being fettered by any engagement or the acceptance of any distinct basis of peace. That assembly met accordingly at that period; but soon evinced a spirit so refractory, that he found it impossible to carry on the government until they were adjourned. The clamour was too loud, and the spirit of discontent and despair which now prevailed in almost every part of France, too deep-seated and profound, to be either stifled by the seductions, or overawed by the terrors, of the imperial authority. Napoleon opened the session in person, with great pomp. "Splendid victories," said he, "have immortalised the French armies in this campaign; defections without a parallel

have rendered those victories unavailing, or turned them against us: France would now have been in danger but for the energy and union of the French. In these momentous circumstances, my first thought has been to summon you around me: my heart has need of the presence and affection of my subjects. I have never been seduced by prosperity; adversity will find me superior to its strokes. I have often given peace to the nations when they had lost every thing: with a part of my conquests I raised up thrones for monarchs who have since abandoned me. I had conceived and executed great designs for the happiness of the world. A monarch and a father, I feel that peace adds to the security of thrones as well as to that of families. Nothing on my part is an obstacle to the re-establishment of peace; you are the natural organs of the throne; it is for you to give an example of energy which may dignify our generation in the eyes of posterity. Let them not say of us, 'They have sacrificed the first interests of their country; they have submitted to laws which England has sought in vain during four centuries to impose upon France.' I am confident that, in this crisis, the French will show themselves worthy of themselves and of me."¹

M. de Fontanes, the orator of the government, answered in his wonted style of sonorous and dignified eloquence, concluding with the exhortation "to rally round the diadem, where the lustre of fifty victories shines through a passing cloud. Fortune is never long wanting to nations which are not wanting to themselves." Napoleon replied—"I will make, without regret, the sacrifices required by the basis proposed by the enemy; my life has but one object, the happiness of the French. Meanwhile, Bearn, Alsace, and Franche-Comté are invaded; the cries of that part of my family agonise my heart; I call the French to the assistance of the French! I call the Frenchmen of Paris, of Brittany, of Normandy, of Champagne, of Burgundy, and of the other departments, to the assistance of their brethren! Shall we abandon them in their misfortune? Peace and the deliverance of our country should be our rallying cry. At the sight of a whole people in arms the stranger will fly, or sign peace on the terms which he himself has proposed."² The

CHAP.
LXXXIV.
1813.

¹ Discours de Nap. Dec. 19, 1813; Moniteur, Dec. 19; and Goldsmith's Recueil, vi. 558.

28.
Eloquent speech of Napoleon on this occasion.

² Thib. xi. 468. Moniteur, Dec. 22. 1813. Goldsmith, vi. 57.

CHAP.
LXXXIV.

1813.

29.
Unexpected
and violent
opposition
which breaks
out in the
Chamber of
Deputies.

time has gone by when we could think of recovering our conquests."

In the senate every thing went on smoothly, and nothing indicated any distrust of, or opposition to, government. But in the Chamber of Deputies matters soon assumed a very different aspect. Notwithstanding the pains which had been taken by the nomination of a president, Regnier, Duke of Massa, by the Emperor, and the filling up of all the vacant seats, twenty-three in number, by the same authority, instead of by the legal mode of election, it soon appeared that a large party in that assembly were animated with a spirit which it was impossible to control. The first serious business which was committed to the senate and the Chamber was the nomination by each of a committee, to whom the documents connected with the negotiations which had been opened with the Allied powers should be submitted. That appointed by the senate, consisting of Talleyrand, Lacépède, Fontanes, and others, entirely in the interest of government, gave no umbrage to Napoleon. But the list circulated by authority for the adoption of the deputies, met with a very different reception. It was rejected by a considerable majority; and a committee appointed instead, consisting of persons, with the exception of one, Lainé, heretofore unknown, and over whom the court possessed little influence. It was easy to foresee, from this commencement, that in the present excited state of the public mind, a contest of a very serious kind awaited the Emperor with his own legislature.¹

¹ Thib. vi.
468, 469.
Montg. vii.
292.

30.
Lainé's
Reports in
the Chamber
of Deputies.
Dec. 28.

In effect, it broke out sooner than could have been anticipated. The committee appointed to consider the diplomatic instruments communicated to them, immediately commenced their labours; and their report, drawn up by Lainé, was presented to the Chamber, in a secret meeting held on the 28th. This report bore that, to prevent the country from becoming the prey of foreigners, it was necessary to nationalise the war; and this could not be done unless the nation and its monarch were united by closer bonds. "It has become indispensable to give a satisfactory answer to our enemies' accusations of aggrandisement. There would be real

magnanimity in a formal declaration, that the independence of the French people, and the integrity of its territory, is all that we contend for. It is for the government to propose measures which may at once repel the enemy, and secure peace on a durable basis. These measures would be soon efficacious, if the French nation were persuaded that the government, in good faith, aspired only to the glory of peace, and that their blood would no longer be shed save to defend our country and secure the protection of the laws. But these words of 'peace' and 'country' will resound in vain, if the institutions are not guaranteed which secure these blessings. It appears, therefore, to the commission to be indispensable that, at the same time that the government proposes the most prompt and efficacious measures for the security of the country, his majesty should be supplicated to maintain entire the execution of the laws, which guarantee to the French liberty and security; and to the nation the free exercise of its political rights.¹

CHAP.
LXXXIV
1813.

¹ Thib. ix.
468, 469.
Buche et
Roux, Hist.
Parl. xxxix.
458.

"The Confederation of the Rhine is an alliance useful only to the Germans: under it a powerful hand secured them independence. If they prefer the chains of Austria, why not abandon them to their desires? As to Holland, since the Allies insist on the conditions of Luneville, we may withdraw without regret from provinces difficult to preserve, in which the English interest exclusively prevails, and to which the English commerce is the price of existence. Have these countries not been so impoverished by the war, that we have seen patrician families withdraw from them, as if pursued by a devastating scourge, to carry elsewhere their industry and their riches? We have need, without doubt, of courage to make the truth known to our Emperor; but with whatever perils the attempt is attended, we will incur them rather than betray his confidence: we would rather endanger our own lives than the existence of the nation.

31.
Remarkable
statements
which it con-
tained.

"Let us attempt no dissimulation: our evils are at their height; the country is menaced on the frontiers at all points; commerce is annihilated, agriculture languishes, industry is expiring; there is no Frenchman

CHAP.
LXXXIV.

1813.

32.
And fright-
ful picture of
the ruin of
the country.

who has not in his family or his fortune some cruel wound to heal. The facts are notorious, and can never be sufficiently brought into view. Agriculture for the last five years has gained nothing; it barely exists, and the fruit of its toil is annually dissipated by the Treasury, which unceasingly devours every thing to satisfy the cravings of ruined and famished armies. The conscription has become, for all France, a frightful scourge, because it has always been carried into execution with the utmost rigour. For the last three years the harvest of death has been reaped three times a-year! a barbarous war without an object swallows up the youth, torn from their education, from agriculture, commerce, and the arts. Have the tears of mothers and the blood of generations thus become the patrimony of kings? It is fit that nations should have a moment's breathing-time; the period has arrived when they should cease to tear out each other's entrails; it is time that thrones should be consolidated, and that our enemies should be deprived of the plea, that we are for ever striving to carry into the whole world the torch of revolution."¹

¹ Parl. Hist.
de France,
xxxix. 457,
458.

33.

Napoleon
resolves to
dissolve the
Chambers,
and his
speech to the
Council of
State.

The reading of this report conjured up a perfect storm in the Chamber. It was so long since the words liberty and political rights had been heard within its walls, that the courtiers started as if high treason had been spoken in their presence. The president Regnier interrupted the report. "Orator," said the nominee of Napoleon, "what you say is unconstitutional." "In what?" replied he; "there is nothing unconstitutional here but your presence." The debate was adjourned to the 30th, and a majority of four-fifths voted an address to the Emperor, and that Lainé's report should be printed and distributed. Napoleon instantly ordered the printing to be stopped, the proofs already thrown off to be seized, and refused to receive the address. He summoned the Council of State, and thus broke forth—"Gentlemen, you are aware of the state of affairs, and the dangers of the country. I thought it fit, without being under any obligation so to do, to make a confidential communication to the Chamber of Deputies on the state of the negotiations, because I wished to associate them with my dearest interests. They have taken advantage of that communication to

Dec. 30.

turn an arm against me, that is, against the country. Instead of aiding me by their efforts, they restrain my own. An imposing attitude on our part can alone repel the enemy—theirs attracts him. Instead of presenting to him a front of brass, they lay bare our wounds: they demand peace with loud cries, when the only possible means of obtaining it is by seconding me in war. They complain of me: they speak of their grievances: but what time, what place, have they chosen for bringing them forward? Is it not *en famille*, and not in presence of the enemy, that they should treat of such subjects? Have I, then, been inaccessible to them? Have I shown myself incapable of listening to reason? Matters have come, however, to such a pass, that a decisive part must be taken. The legislative body, instead of uniting with me to save France, does all it can to precipitate its fall: it betrays its duties; I fulfil mine. I dissolve it.”¹

CHAP.
LXXXIV.
1813.

¹ Thib. ix.
469, 470.

He then caused a decree to be read, which he proposed to issue, declaring that two-fifths of the legislative body had already exhausted their powers; that another fifth, on the 1st of January, would be in the same situation; and that, therefore, the legislative body was prorogued till the elections were completed. “Such,” resumed the Emperor, “is the decree which I propose to issue; and if I were assured that this very day the people of Paris, in a body, were to come to massacre me in the Tuileries, I would not the less persevere in it—for it is my duty. When the French people intrusted me with their destinies, I considered the laws given me to govern them; if I had deemed them insufficient, I would not have accepted the charge. They need not suppose that I am a Louis XVI. When I became Emperor, I did not cease to be a citizen. If anarchy is to be installed anew, I will abdicate, and mix in the crowd to enjoy my part in the sovereignty, rather than remain at the head of affairs, when I can only endanger all, without protecting any. My determination is conformable to the law: if all would now discharge their duty, I would be invincible behind it in face of the enemy.”²

34.
His decree
dissolving
the Cham-
bers.

² Thib. ix.
470, 471.

On the day following, being the 1st January 1814, on occasion of the public reception of the authorities in the Tuileries, Napoleon broke forth in a strain of vehement

CHAP.
LXXXIV.

1813.

35.
His violent
invective
against the
Chambers at
the Tuileries.

invective against the legislative body: "Gentlemen," said he, "you have had it in your power to do much good, and you have done nothing but mischief. Eleven-twelfths of you are good, the rest are factious. What do you hope for by putting yourselves in opposition? To gain possession of power? But what are your means for doing so? Are you the representatives of the people? I am so: four times I have been invoked by the nation; and four times I have had the votes of four millions of men for me. I have a title to supreme authority which you have not. You are nothing but the representatives of the departments of the nation. Your commission has been guided by the spirit of the Gironde—M. Lainé is a conspirator, an agent of England, with which he is in correspondence by means of the advocate Desèze; the others are actuated by factious motives. I will keep my eye on M. Lainé: he is a bad man. Your report is drawn up with an astute and perfidious spirit, of the effects of which you are well aware. Two battles lost in Champagne would not have done me so much mischief.

"I have immolated my passions, my pride, my ambition, to the good of France. I hoped that you would appreciate my motives, and not urge me to sacrifices inconsistent with the honour of the nation. Far from that, in your report you mingle irony with reproach; you tell me that adversity has given me salutary counsels. How can you reproach me with my misfortunes? I have supported them with honour, because I have received from nature a strong and indomitable character; and if I had not possessed that ardent temperament of mind, I would never have raised myself to the first throne in the world. Nevertheless, I have need of consolation, and I expected it from you: so far from giving it, you have endeavoured to cover me with mire; but I am one of those men whom you may kill, but cannot dishonour. Is it by such reproaches that you expect to restore the lustre of the throne? What is the throne? Four pieces of gilded wood covered with a piece of velvet. The real throne has its seat in the nation: you cannot separate the two without mutual injury; for the nation has more need of me than I have of the

nation. What could it do without a chief and without a guide? When the question was how we could repel the enemy, you demanded institutions, as if we had them not! Are you not content with the constitution? If you are not so, you should have told me so four years ago, or postponed your demand till two years after a general peace. Is this the moment to insist on such a demand?

"You wish to imitate the Constituent Assembly, and commence a revolution? Be it so. You will find I shall not imitate Louis XVI.: I would rather abandon the throne: I would prefer making part of the sovereign people to being an enslaved king. I am sprung from the people: I know the obligations I contracted when I ascended the throne. You have done me much mischief: you would have done me still more, if I had allowed your report to be printed. You speak of abuses, of vexations—I know as well as you that such have existed: they arose from circumstances and the misfortunes of the times. But was it necessary to let all Europe into our secrets? Is it fitting to wash our dirty linen in public instead of in the privacy of our families? In what you say there is mixture of truth and falsehood. What, then, was your obvious duty? To have confidentially made known your grounds of complaint to me, by whom they would have been thankfully received: I do not love those who have oppressed you more than you yourselves do. In three months we shall have peace: the enemy will be chased from our territory, or I shall be dead. We have greater resources than you imagine: our enemies have never conquered us—never shall. They will be chased across the frontier more quickly than they have entered it." The dissolution of the Chambers immediately followed this violent apostrophe, which paints the character of Napoleon better than volumes of ordinary history. Although, however, he had been so vehement in his menaces, and had denounced M. Lainé, in particular, as sold to England and a traitor to his country, yet no arrests or measures of severity followed. The deputies retired without molestation to their departments; and the Emperor, engrossed in military preparations,¹ forgot this transient ebullition of resistance in the legislature,

¹ Hist. Parl de France, xxxix. 460, 461.

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LXXXIV.

1813.

36.
Measures of
Napoleon for
the defence of
France.

Jan. 4.

Jan. 9.

¹ Thib. ix.
476, 479.
Decrees,
Jan. 4, and
Jan. 9, 1814.
Goldsmith,
vi. 584, 587.
Cap. x. 330,
334.

37.
Treaty of
Valençay, by
which Ferdi-
nand is re-
stored to the
Spanish
crown.

or prudently dissembled his resentment, lest he should extend still further a flame which he could not extinguish.

Vast preparations were made for resisting the enemy. Commissioners were sent down to all the departments to hasten the levies of men, accelerate their equipment and arming, take measures for the arming and provisioning of the fortresses, and, where invasion was threatened, effect a levy *en masse*. A decree of 4th January fixed the budget at 1,176,800,000 francs, or £47,072,000 sterling; and in order to provide for this immense sum, fifty per cent was ordered to be added to the land tax; and the duties on doors and windows, as well as the personal and assessed taxes, were doubled by the sole authority of the Emperor. The commissioners sent down to the provinces on these momentous missions, however, though invested with very ample powers, were men little calculated to move the masses; being mostly old generals or decayed functionaries of the imperial court, who had no feeling in common with the great bulk of the community. But even if they had been endowed with the energy of Danton, or the fire of Mirabeau, the passions were extinct in the nation; the time was past when it was possible again to revive the revolutionary fever. A sombre feeling pervaded all classes that the wars of Napoleon were endless, and that a change of government or dynasty could alone put a stop to the ceaseless effusion of human blood. Soon after, the rapid advance of the Allies rendered all these defensive preparations of little avail; and the occupation of a third of France by their victorious armies, reduced the resources and weakened the influence of the Emperor, as much as it augmented the physical means, and swelled the moral strength of his antagonists.¹

The presence of external danger at this period extorted from Napoleon two important concessions in foreign diplomacy, which of themselves were calculated to have effected an entire alteration in the relations of the European states to each other, and implied a total abandonment on his part of the principal objects of his Continental policy. The first of these was the treaty of Valençay, by which he agreed to the liberation of Ferdinand VII.

from his confinement in France, and his restoration to the throne of Spain. The coincidence of the invasion of the south of the empire by Wellington, with the climax of discontent which the democratic leaders at Cadiz had raised against their English allies, from the glorious successes of their arms, and the entire liberation of the Península from the invader's yoke, naturally suggested to the French Emperor the hope that, by relinquishing all thoughts of retaining Joseph on the throne of Spain, and restoring the imprisoned monarch to his dominions, he might not only break the sword of Wellington in his hands, but convert the exasperated Jacobins of Cadiz into useful allies.¹

The sacrifice required was equal to nothing; for Joseph was already bereft of his dominions, and had recently arrived at Paris, accompanied only by a few baggage waggons, laden with the riches of the Escorial, the poor remains of a lost crown, dishonoured throne, and plundered realm. By the advice of Talleyrand, Napoleon immediately abandoned his disconsolate brother to his fate, and opened a negotiation with Ferdinand, the object of which was to restore the captive monarch to his dominions, and re-establish peace with Spain on such terms as might be most likely to embroil that power with its English allies. The negotiation was not long of being brought to a conclusion. Ferdinand, wearied of his long detention at Valençay, was overjoyed at the prospect of regaining his liberty and his dominions; and he had little scruple in agreeing to any terms which were exacted of him. He was certain that they would at all events procure for him his liberation; and he flattered himself with the secret hope that, if any of them should prove burdensome, he could avail himself of the plea that the treaty was concluded under the coercion of captivity, and was no longer binding on him or the nation after he had regained his independence.²

It was in the middle of November, immediately after the return of Napoleon from Leipsic, that this negotiation was commenced under the direction of Maret, and by the intervention of M. Laforest, an able diplomatist who had long been ambassador of France at the court of Joseph, and had there acquired an accurate knowledge of

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LXXXIV.

1813.

¹ Thib. ix.
442, 443.
Cap. x. 310,
311.

38.
Napoleon
abandons
Joseph and
restores
Ferdinand.

² Cap. x. 310,
311. Thib.
ix. 442, 443.

39.
Negotiation
which led to
the treaty.

CHAP.
LXXXIV.

1813.

Nov. 11,
1813.

Nov. 21.

¹ Thib. ix.
442 443.
Cap. x. 310.
Napoleon to
Ferdinand.
Nov. 11,
1813.

40.
Its condi-
tions.

² Cap. x.
310, 311.
Thib. ix.
442, 443.
See the
treaty in
Martens, i.
654. N. R

the secret springs of influence in the Spanish councils. The Emperor wrote to Ferdinand in a conciliatory and flattering strain; representing that the affairs of his empire had inspired him with the desire to close at once the contest in the Peninsula, to put an end to the anarchy which had so long desolated its provinces, and terminate that fatal ascendancy which England, for its own selfish purposes, had converted into the means of diffusin universal ruin over its kingdoms. Ferdinand replied, in cautious terms, that he could not conclude an arrangement without the consent of the Spanish nation, or at least of the Regency; and that, rather than treat without its deputies, he would spend all his life at Valençay. The Duke de San Carlos, however, was sent shortly after to the captive monarch, who was no sooner assured of the intention of Napoleon really to liberate him from his captivity, than he agreed to every thing that was required.¹

The treaty was concluded on the 11th December, and stipulated the recognition, by the Emperor, of Ferdinand as King of Spain and the Indies; that the English troops should retire from the Spanish dominions; that Port-Mahon and Ceuta should never be ceded to Great Britain; that the high contracting parties should mutually guarantee each other's dominions, and maintain the rights of their respective flags, agreeably to the stipulations of the treaty of Utrecht; and that the late monarch, Charles IV., should receive an annuity of thirty millions of reals, (£300,000,) and two millions of reals (£20,000) yearly to the Queen-dowager, in case of her surviving her husband. The treaty provided for its ratification by the regency established at Madrid. Thus had Napoleon and Talleyrand the address, at the conclusion of a long and bloody war, in which their arms had been utterly and irretrievably overthrown, to procure from the monarch whom they had retained so long in captivity, terms as favourable as they could possibly have expected from a long series of victories. And thus did the sovereign, who had regained his liberty and his crown by the profuse shedding of English blood, make the first use of his promised freedom to banish from his dominions the Allies whose swords had liberated him from prison, and placed him on the throne.²

The result, however, both disappointed the hopes of the French diplomatists, and saved the honour of the Spanish nation. The spirit of the Peninsular revolution, as Wellington often remarked, was essentially anti-Gallican; and though the democrats of Cadiz, in the ardour of their pursuit of absolute power, had evinced the most inveterate hostility against the English general and his gallant army, and even gone so far as to open secret negotiations with Joseph for the recognition of his title to the crown, provided he subscribed the republican constitution of 1812;* yet they recoiled from actual submission to France, and could not be brought to give their sanction to a treaty, extorted from their sovereign while in a state of captivity, which was calculated to arrest their arms in the moment of victory, and stain the honour of a contest which already resounded through the world. The Regency and the Cortes, accordingly, had the virtue to refuse their ratification of the treaty; and although Napoleon, hoping to distract or paralyse the Spanish armies, sent Ferdinand back into Spain, where he arrived by the route of Catalonia on the 19th March, yet the treaty, as it remained without ratification, made no change on the military operations; and Spain took a part in the war down to the final overthrow of the power of Napoleon.¹

A similar feeling of necessity induced Napoleon shortly after to recede from another favourite object of his ambition, and to consent to the liberation of the Pope from his long and painful confinement at Fontainebleau. The whole of Christendom had long been scandalised at the prolonged imprisonment of the supreme Pontiff, and the French Emperor had felt the consequence of the profound indignation which it had excited, in the inveterate hostility of the Peninsular nations, as well as in the readiness with which Austria had united her forces to those of the alliance. With the double view, accordingly, of depriving his enemies of this envenomed weapon of hostility, and propitiating Austria—from the diplomacy of which he never ceased to expect secret favour, in consequence of the matrimonial alliance—he made private overtures to the Pope at Fontainebleau early in January.

CHAP.
LXXXIV.

1813.

-41.

It is not
ratified by the
Regency and
Cortes.March 19.
¹ Nap. vi.
511. Wel-
lington to
General
Clinton,
Jan. 27,
1814. Gurw.
xi. 480.

42.

Napoleon
opens a
negotiation
with the
Pope.* See *Ante*, chap. lxxvi. § 42.

CHAP.
LXXXIV.

1813.

Nov. 15,
1813.

Jan. 18.

¹ Artaud,
Vie de Pie
VII. ii. 362,
359.

43.

Who declines
to negotiate,
but is libe-
rated by
Napoleon.

Jan. 22.

² Artaud,
Vie de Pie
VII. ii. 362,
371. Cap.
x. 312, 313.

What was not a little extraordinary, the person first charged with the delicate mission was a lady of rank belonging to the court of Marie Louise—the Marquise Anne Brignole of Sienna. She had several interviews with his Holiness in November; but the Pope was firm in declining to come to any accommodation till he was restored to Rome: and he persisted in the same refusal when the Archbishop of Bourges formally offered, two months afterwards, on the Emperor's part, to restore the Holy See as far as Perugia.¹

He replied, that the restitution of his dominions was an act of justice which Providence would itself work out, and which could not be the fit subject of a treaty while the Pope was detained, to the scandal of Christendom, in a state of captivity. He added—“Possibly our faults render us unworthy to behold again the Eternal City; but our successors will recover the dominions which appertain to them. You may assure the Emperor that we feel no hostility towards him—religion does not permit it: and, when we are at Rome, he will see we shall do what is suitable.” The necessities of the Emperor, however, rendered it indispensable for him to disembarass himself of the presence of the Pope, even although he could not extort from him any concessions of territory to prop up his falling empire; and accordingly, four days afterwards, on the 22d January, Pius VII. was conveyed away from Fontainebleau towards the south of France, by Montauban and Castelnaudary. Yet even in this act of concession the grasping disposition of the Emperor was rendered apparent: he delayed, on various pretexts, the passage of the supreme Pontiff through the south of France, hopeful that a return of fortune to his arms might enable him to retain so precious a prisoner in his power. When Paris was taken by the Allied armies, he was still detained at Tarascon, near the mouth of the Rhone; and the final order for his deliverance proceeded from the provisional government which succeeded upon the fall of Napoleon.²

Negotiations of an important character at the same time were going on, between both Napoleon and the Allied powers, with Murat, King of Naples. That brave

but irresolute prince, seeing clearly the approaching downfall of the Emperor, and actuated as well by his own inclinations as by the ambition of his queen, Caroline, who, after having tasted of the sweets of royalty, had little inclination to share in the ruin of her brother and benefactor, was desirous above all things, by one means or other, to secure, and if possible strengthen, in the coming catastrophe, his own throne. With this view, after the overthrow of Leipsic, when the external fortunes of the Emperor were evidently sealed, while he still kept up a confidential correspondence with Napoleon, he advanced a column of troops to Ancona, which he occupied, proclaiming loudly his resolution to establish the independence of Italy. At the same time he secretly opened a negotiation with Prince Metternich, and it was evident that he would join his arms to whichever party should bid highest for his alliance.¹

To Napoleon he held out, that matters had now arrived at that pass when it was necessary to take a decisive part; that the menacing position of the English in Sicily rendered it wholly impossible for him to hazard the bulk of his forces to the north of the Po; but that, if the Emperor would guarantee to him the whole Italian provinces to the south of that river, and unite them all into one monarchy, he would rekindle the flame of independence in Italy, and raise such a spirit in that peninsula, that Austria should never cross the Adige.* To Metternich he at the same time represented, that the

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44.
Negotiations
of Murat
with Napo-
leon and the
Allies.

¹ Cap. x.
343, 344.
Thib. ix. 494,
496.

45.
His double-
dealing w.th
Napoleon and
the
Allies, with
the last of
whom he
concludes a
treaty.

* "Your Majesty need not indulge the hopes you have formed of seeing me pass the Po; for if I put that river between my army and my own dominions, I should have no means of resisting the fermentation which now prevails in Romagna, Tuscany, and my own states. Be assured, Sire! the proclamation of the independence of Italy, forming one single power of all its states to the south of the Po, would save that country: without such a measure it is lost beyond redemption. It will be partitioned anew; and your sublime design of emancipating the Italian peninsula, after having covered it with glory, is for ever lost. Put at this moment the provinces beyond the Po at my disposal, and I will engage that the Austrians shall never cross the Adige. The enemy at present shake the Italians by speaking to them of independence; the hope which they have in their armies has hitherto obviated the effect of these propositions; but will they continue proof against such seductions, if the King of Naples do nothing to realise their hopes, and continue, on the contrary, to maintain the yoke of the stranger? It is mere delusion to suppose they will. Will your majesty explain yourself on this vital point? Time presses; the enemy is daily reinforced. I am constrained to silence; and the season approaches when I in my turn will be driven to make a choice, and forced to join the enemy. Sire! In the name of all you have dearest in the world—in the name of your glory—delay no longer. Make peace!—make it on any terms."—MURAT to NAPOLEON, 25th December 1813; CAPEFIGUE, x. 541, 545. *Note.*

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Jan. 11.
1 See the
treaty in
Martens,
N. R. i. 660.
Cap. x. 343,
344.

46.
He invades
the Roman
territories.
Jan. 19.
Jan. 16.

ambition of Napoleon was insatiable, as his infatuation was incurable, and that he would willingly enter into the coalition of the Allied sovereigns, provided he were guaranteed the possession of his Neapolitan dominions. Napoleon having returned no answer to his last and urgent demand for the establishment, in his favour, of a sovereignty embracing the whole territories to the south of the Po, he soon came to terms with the Allied powers, and early in January concluded a treaty, by which it was stipulated that he should be guaranteed in his Italian dominions, and join their forces on the Po with thirty thousand men.¹

No sooner was this treaty signed, than Murat prepared to act in conformity to it, and on the 19th January entered Rome at the head of twenty thousand men. The slender French garrison retired into the castle of St Angelo; and thus was the second city in Napoleon's empire wrested from him by the arms, not of his enemies, but of his brother-in-law and lieutenant, the old comrade and friend whom he had raised from a private station to the throne of Naples! Murat accompanied this invasion by an energetic proclamation, in which he outstripped the most inveterate enemies of France in his denunciation of the perfidy and violence of the Revolutionary government. "Soldiers! as long as I could believe that the Emperor Napoleon combated for peace and the happiness of France, I fought by his side; but now it is no longer possible to give credit to that illusion. The Emperor breathes nothing but war. I would betray the interests of my native country, of my present dominions, and of yourselves, if I did not at once separate my arms from his, to join them to those of the powerful Allies, whose magnanimous intentions are to re-establish the independence of nations and the dignity of thrones. Soldiers! there are but two banners in Europe—on the one are inscribed Religion, Morality, Justice, Law, Peace, and Happiness—on the other, Persecution, Artifice, Violence, Tyranny, War, and Mourning to all nations." A caustic, though, in the main, just expression; but which sounds strangely, coming from the brother-in-law of Napoleon, and a child of the Revolution!²

² Thib. ix.
496. Cap. x.
342, 344.

In the general fever of anxiety to preserve the dignities

and possessions they had acquired, hardly any member of Napoleon's family escaped unsullied. Even Eugene Beauharnais, though a more exalted and blameless character than Murat, was not uninfected by the contagion: although he wrote publicly that he would not separate himself from his benefactor, yet he in secret received overtures from the Allies, and subsequently sent a plenipotentiary to Chatillon, to attend to his separate interests. What ultimately prevented this negotiation from coming to maturity, was not any disinclination on his part to come to an accommodation, but the impossibility of reconciling his pretensions to his Italian dominions with the ambitious views of Austria over that part of the peninsula. All heads were swept away by the torrent: every former obligation, how great soever, was forgotten. Among the rest, the Princess Eliza, Napoleon's sister, endeavoured to save her fortune in the general wreck: her uneasiness at the prospect of a downfall was extreme, and she lent a ready ear to the suggestion of Fouché when he passed through Florence, on his way back from the honourable exile which the Emperor had assigned him at Rome and Naples—"Once Napoleon is dead, every thing will fall into its natural place, and they will leave you your beautiful palazzo Pitti."¹

In the north of Europe a more honourable constancy in misfortune was exhibited: but the march of events was irresistible, and even the warmest allies of the French were at last compelled to abandon their fortunes, and range themselves on the side of the European confederacy. The Danes, whom jealousy of Russia, not less than the bitter recollection of their capital twice taken by the English, had inspired with a strong predilection for the French alliance, and who had exhibited, like the King of Saxony, an honourable fidelity to their engagements during the general defection of 1813, were unable any longer to continue the contest. Entirely severed from the armies of Napoleon by the evacuation of Germany after the battle of Leipsic: unable either to succour or derive assistance from the corps of Davoust, shut up in Hamburg; pressed by the army of the Crown-prince of Sweden on the south, and the fleets of England on the north—the Danish monarchy was menaced with imme-

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47.
Incipient
defection of
Eugene
Beauharnais.

¹ Cap. x. 344,
Fouche,
Mém. ii. 254,
255.

48.
Treaty be-
tween Den-
mark and the
Allied
Powers.

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Jan. 14.

1 See the
Treaty in
Martens,
Sup. i. 66;
and in
Schoell, iv.
227.

49.
Important
military con-
federacy of
Germany.

diate destruction, and the cabinet of Copenhagen had no alternative but to submit, even on the hard terms of agreeing to abandon Norway. After a short negotiation, accordingly, a treaty was concluded between Denmark and the Allied powers, by which it was stipulated that the former should join the coalition against France, and bring to its support a corps, the strength of which was to be afterwards determined, to operate in the north of Germany. The King of Denmark agreed to the cession of Norway to Sweden; the King of Sweden, on his part, engaging to maintain the rights and privileges of its inhabitants inviolate; and, in exchange for this painful sacrifice, the duchy of Pomerania, with the island of Rugen, were ceded by Sweden to the Danish crown. Thus was accomplished the first permanent cession of a kingdom in the North of Europe, consequent upon the wars of the French Revolution. And although history cannot contemplate without regret the violent transference of a brave and ancient people from the government of their fathers to a stranger rule; yet the mournful impression is much alleviated by the reflection, that Denmark obtained, to a certain extent at least, an equivalent adjacent to its own territories; that the Scandinavian peninsula was thus for the first time united under one dominion, and a power all but insular established in the Baltic, which, with the support of the British navy, may possibly be able to maintain its independence in future times, even beside the colossal power which overshadows the north of Europe.¹

While the grand confederacy was thus strengthening itself by fresh alliances on the shores of the Baltic and the Mediterranean, and the last allies of the French domination were breaking off from its sinking empire, the great central power of Germany was rising with portentous energy at the call of patriotism; and the military strength of its inhabitants, roused to the highest pitch by the trumpet of victory, was directed with consummate talent to the prosecution of the last and greatest object of the war—the final subjugation of the power of Napoleon, and the extrication of Europe from the thralldom of the Revolution. The accession of Bavaria to the coalition on the eve of the battle of Leipsic, had already been followed

by that of all the lesser powers which formed part of the Rhenish Confederation; and the great outwork which had been erected with so much effort by Napoleon, to form the advanced post of France against Europe, had already become the outwork of Europe against France. The whole population welcomed the Allied troops as deliverers; transports beat in every bosom, joy beamed from every eye: and before even the energy of the Allied cabinets could arrange the different governments in their confederacy, the people had every where made common cause with their armies. A few of the princes, particularly the Grand-duke Charles of Dalberg, Prince Isenberg, and the Prince of La Layen, held out for the French, and their dominions were in consequence occupied by the Allied troops; but all the others gladly ranged themselves under the banners of the victorious powers. Already on the 21st October, before the sovereigns separated from Leipsic, a convention had been entered into, for the organisation of the whole forces of Germany against the common enemy, and the best development of these resources for the purposes of the war. A central administration had been formed, to direct the efforts and regulate the contributions of the states. At the head of it was placed Baron Stein, whose energy and wisdom had so early prepared in Prussia the means of resistance to the French domination.¹

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Oct. 21,
1813.

¹ Schoell, x.
334, 337.
Hard. xii.
257, 261.

The formal accession of the leading princes of the Confederation of the Rhine was soon obtained to the new league. On the very day after the convention was signed at Leipsic, the King of Würtemberg concluded a treaty with the Allies, and his contingent was fixed at twelve thousand men: the Duke of Saxe-Weimar signed his accession on the 1st, the Duke of Darmstadt on the 2d of November; and the whole lesser princes, with the exceptions above mentioned, followed their example. The Elector of Hesse stood in a somewhat different situation, as he was not a member of the Rhenish Confederacy, his states having been swallowed up in the rickety kingdom of Westphalia. He was accordingly admitted into the grand alliance by a separate treaty in the beginning of December, which immediately restored him to the possession of all his ancient dominions, with the exception of

50.
Accession of
the Princes of
the Confed-
eration of
the Rhine to
the new
league.
Oct. 22.
Nov. 1 and 2,
1813.

Dec. 2.

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¹ Schoell, x.
533, 543.
Martens, xii.
643 and 649.

51.
Treaties at
Frankfort in
November
for regulating
the German
Confederacy
against
France.

Nov. 18 and
24, 1813.

² Martens,
xii. 619, 626.
Schoell, x.
353, 358.

the bailiwicks of Dorheim, which had been assigned to the Grand-duke of Darmstadt. The contingent of the Elector of Hesse was fixed at twelve thousand men. The respectable but unfortunate King of Saxony had been treated with unwonted severity by the Allied sovereigns after the battle of Leipsic: none of them, excepting the Crown-prince of Sweden, had visited him in his misfortunes; and he had been conveyed away, a prisoner, to Berlin, where he remained uncertain of the fate which awaited him. But the whole civil and military resources of Saxony were at the disposal of the grand alliance; and its soldiers, borne away by the torrent, marched as cheerfully in the ranks of the Fatherland, as those of the states which had gained most by the crusade for its deliverance.¹

It was both a delicate and complicated work to arrange into one organised body the various members of the Rhenish Confederacy, and, after adjusting the pretensions, determining on the reclamations, and smoothing down the jealousies of its numerous princes, to combine the whole into one effective league for the prosecution of the war. The general enthusiasm, however, which prevailed, rendered these difficulties much less formidable than they would have been at any other time; and the previous organisation of Napoleon presented a machine ready-made, and of most skilful construction, which was now applied with fatal effect against himself. By two treaties concluded at Frankfort on the 18th and 24th November, the important objects of providing for the maintenance of the grand army, and regulating the contingents to be furnished by all the German princes who had joined the confederacy, were accomplished. To effect the first object, each of the princes of the old Confederacy of the Rhine engaged to provide at once, on his own credit, a sum equal to the gross revenue of his dominions; and the payments were to be made in instalments every three months, till the whole was paid up. The sum total thus raised at once on credit, was 17,116,500 florins, equal to about £1,770,000 sterling.²

In addition to those ample payments in money, the most effective measures were taken to draw forth the military power of the whole states forming the Germanic Confederacy. The contingent of each state was taken at

the double of that which it had furnished to the Confederation of the Rhine; the one half to be provided in troops of the line, the other half in landwehr: and in addition to this, corps of volunteers were permitted, and the land-sturm or levy *en masse* was organised and made ready for action, in all the countries which seemed to require such extraordinary precautions. The troops thus raised, amounted, independent of the forces of Bavaria, which were thirty-five thousand strong, to upwards of a hundred thousand, besides an equal number of landwehr; and they were divided into six corps. Of these, Saxony furnished twenty thousand, Hanover and Hesse twelve thousand, Würtemberg twelve thousand, and Baden eight thousand.* The most minute regulations were laid down for providing the requisite supplies, hospitals, and provisions, for this vast aggregation of men. So universal and wide-spread was the organisation which had now arisen for arraying Europe in a defensive league against France, and so unanimous the concord which the oppressions of the Revolution had established among nations so various, interests so opposite, and animosities so inveterate.¹

Nothing remained now but to detach Switzerland from the French alliance, and from the great salient bastion of the Alps to threaten France on the side where its defences were weakest, and the least precautions had been taken by preceding sovereigns to guard against foreign invasion. The Helvetic Confederacy, like all feeble states, without being either strongly attached to or exasperated against France, were desirous to preserve their neutrality, and anxiously sought to prevent their country from becoming the theatre of war. Aware of the great importance of securing the frontier of the Jura from invasion, if not by the attachment, at least by the interests of his mountain neighbours, Napoleon had studiously avoided both insult and injury to them, and forbore to draw those resources from their territory which the proximity of its situation, and warlike character of its inhabitants, placed within his reach. They had neither been plundered and insulted like the Prussians, nor denationalised like the Tyrolese:

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52.
Military
forces to be
furnished by
the different
powers of
Germany.

¹ Schoell, x.
353, 358.
Martens, xii.
619 and 626;
and Schoell,
Recueil, ii.
58.

53.
Negotiations
with Switzer-
land.

* See Appendix B, Chap. lxxxiv., for a detailed account of the forces furnished by each of the states of the new German Confederacy.—SCHOELL, *Histoire des Traités de Paix*, x. 357.

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Nov. 18,
1813.

¹ Schoell, x.
359, 361.
Jom. iv. 521.

54.
The Allies
notify to the
Diet their
intention to
enter the
Swiss terri-
tory.
Dec. 8.

² Schoell,
Hist. des
Trait. x. 362,
364. Recueil,
iv. 31, 42.
Dec. 21,
1813.

the conscription of men had been far from oppressive, and the cantons had felt the war rather in the obstruction it occasioned to foreign commerce, than in any peculiar exactions with which it had been attended. An extraordinary diet, assembled at Zurich, had already, in the middle of November, proclaimed the neutrality of the republic, and sent a body of men to the frontiers to cause them to be respected. The French Emperor readily acceded to a declaration which promised to secure France from invasion on the side where it was most vulnerable, and immediately withdrew his troops from the canton of Ticino, which they had occupied. But the Allied sovereigns were not disposed to be equally forbearing, for it was as much their interest to make their attack from the side of the Alps as it was that of their adversary to avoid it; and accordingly, having resolved to occupy part of the Swiss territory with their troops, they despatched M. Libzettern and Count Capo d'Istria to the Helvetic diet, to endeavour to obtain their consent to such a proceeding.¹

Austria had already taken the initiative in this important negotiation. On the 8th December, M. De Schrant, the envoy of the cabinet of Vienna at the Helvetic Confederacy, presented a note to the diet, in which he declared that the Allied sovereigns were resolved to extricate them from their degrading state of dependence, which had now reached such a height, that their orators were obliged to pronounce an annual eulogium on their oppressors. On the 20th December, M. Libzettern and De Schrant, the Austrian envoy, presented to the diet a note, in which they declared that the intention of the Allied sovereigns was to deliver Switzerland from that state of dependence which, under the specious name of protection, had so long kept them in a state of thralldom: that in carrying these intentions into execution, they must of necessity enter the Helvetic territories; that they could not recognise a neutrality which existed only in name; but that they would interfere in no respect in their internal government, and that, from the moment that their independence was really established, they would rigidly observe their neutrality.² To this note was annexed the order of the day, which, on the following day, Prince Schwartzenberg

was to issue on entering the Swiss territory.* This decisive step at once destroyed the influence which, under the name of mediation, the French Emperor had so long exercised in the states of the Helvetic Confederacy;¹ and as it was followed next day by the entrance of the Allied forces in great strength into their territories, it produced an immediate effect in the Swiss councils.

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Eight days afterwards, a majority of the deputies of the old cantons, viz., those of Uri, Schwytz, Lucerne, Zurich, Glarus, Zug, Fribourg, Bâle, Schaffhausen, and Appenzel, declared the constitution introduced by Napoleon, by his act of mediation, annulled; and promulgated the important principle, that no one canton should be subjected to the government of another—a declaration which, by virtually raising the hitherto dependent cantons of St Gall, Thurgovia, Argovia, and the Pays de Vaud, to the rank of independent members of the confederacy, laid the foundation of a more extended and equal confederacy in future times. On the 31st December, the Allied sovereigns issued a declaration, in which they called on the Swiss to take up arms to aid in the recovery of their independence; and at the same time come under a solemn engagement not to lay them down till the independence of the Swiss Confederacy was secured, and placed under the guarantee of the great powers, and till the portions of it, especially

55.

The Cantons
annul the
constitution
of Napoleon.

Dec. 31.

* “The irresistible march of events in a war which all just and right-seeing men must look on in the same light, and the necessity of consolidating and securing the happy results which have hitherto flowed from it, have led the Allied armies to the frontiers of Switzerland, and forced them, in furtherance of their operations, to traverse a part of its territory. The necessity of this step, and the vast results dependent on it, will probably furnish a sufficient vindication of it to all reasonable men; but that necessity, great as it is, would not have appeared a sufficient justification in the eyes of the Allied powers, if Switzerland had been in a situation to maintain a true and real neutrality; but so little is this the case, that all the principles of the law of nations authorise them to regard as null the neutrality she has proclaimed. The Allied sovereigns recognise, as the most sacred principle of that law, the right of every state, how inconsiderable soever, to assert and maintain its independence: they are so far from contesting that principle, that it is the basis of all their proceedings: but no state can pretend to neutrality which is not in a condition to assert, and has not in fact asserted, its independence. The pretended neutrality of a state which is habitually governed by external influence, is but a name; and while it secures to one belligerent the advantages of a substantial alliance, it exposes the other to the evils of a real hostility. When, therefore, in a war the object of which is to impose limits to a menacing and preponderating power, such a neutrality serves as a shield to injustice, and a barrier to those who strive for a better order of things, it must disappear with the evils which have created it. No one can dispute that such is the actual position of Switzerland towards the Allied powers on the one hand, and France, whose south-eastern frontier it covers, on the other.”—*Declaration of the Allied Powers to the Swiss Diet, 21st Dec. 1813*; SCHÖELL, *Recueil*, ii. 8, 12.

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¹ See Schoell,
Hist. des
Trait. x. 362,
364; and
Recueil, iv.
31, 42; ii. 1,
5, 20.

56.
Completion
of the Grand
Alliance
against
France.

57.
Immense
forces accu-
mulated by
the Allied
powers.

the Valais, which had been seized by the French Emperor, were restored to their rightful owners. In these changes, although the aristocratic cantons, especially that of Berne, went cordially along with the Allied powers, yet the Swiss, as a whole, were rather passive submitters to, than active auxiliaries of, their arms. But so equitable was the constitution which they ultimately established, and so complete the independence they have since enjoyed under it, that the Helvetic states have no cause to regret the transient evils which the passage of the Allied forces through their territory occasioned.¹

Thus was at length accomplished that great confederacy which the prophetic mind of Pitt had long foreseen could alone extricate Europe from the fetters of the French revolutionary power, but which the selfish ambition and blind jealousies of the European states had hitherto prevented them from forming. From the rock of Gibraltar to the shores of Archangel—from the banks of the Scheldt to the margin of the Bosphorus—all Europe was now arrayed in one vast league against France, which was reduced entirely to its own resources. From the kingdom of Italy it could not expect succour, but might rather anticipate demands for assistance: all its other Allies were now arrayed against it; and the power which, only eighteen months before, had headed a crusade of all the western states of the Continent against the independence of Russia, was now reduced to combat, with its own unaided forces, the combined military strength of all Europe. An astonishing change to have been produced in so short a time, and strikingly characteristic of the oppression of that military tyranny which could thus, in so brief a space, reconcile interests so discordant, still jealousies so inveterate, and combine forces so far severed by language, race, and political institutions!

The efforts of the Allied cabinets, and the enthusiastic spirit which universally prevailed among their people, had now accumulated forces so prodigious for the invasion of France, that nothing in ancient or modern times had ever approached to their magnitude. By the universal arming of the people, and establishment of the landwehr in all the German states, an enormous array had been collected, which enabled the Allies, with-

out materially weakening their military force on the Rhine, to blockade all the fortresses on that river and the Elbe which were still in the hands of the French, and thus irrevocably sever from the French empire the numerous garrisons, still mustering above a hundred thousand combatants, which were shut up within their walls. The absurdity of Napoleon clinging with such tenacity to these advanced posts of conquest, isolated in the midst of insurgent nations, when he was contending for his very existence in his own dominions, became now strikingly apparent. They at once detached from his standards a vast army, which, if collected together, might have enabled him still to make head against his enemies, but which, in the foreign fortresses, served as so many beacons scattered through the enemy's territory, at once recalling the recollection of past oppression, and indicating the undiminished resolution to resume it. This extraordinary resolution on the part of the French Emperor to abandon, even in his last extremity, none of the strongholds which he held in any part of Europe, and which cost him, from first to last, above a hundred thousand of his best troops, whom it compelled to surrender to bodies of ill-disciplined landwehr and militia, little superior to themselves in number, was, beyond all doubt, one of the greatest causes of his fall; and it affords a memorable example of the manner in which revolutionary ambition overleaps itself, and falls down on the other side.

The forces which the Allied powers had collected by the end of December to co-operate in the projected invasion of France and Italy, were thus disposed. The Grand Army, still under the immediate direction, as in the former campaign, of Prince Schwartzberg, numbered two hundred and sixty thousand combatants; and, even after deducting the usual average number of sick and non-effective, might be expected to bring two hundred thousand sabres and bayonets into the field. Its composition, however, was heterogeneous; and though it boasted the imperial guards of Russia, Prussia, and Austria, within its ranks, and had the *élite* of the forces of those great military monarchies around its standards, yet it was far from being powerful and efficient, as a whole, in proportion

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58.

Grand army
under Prince
Schwartz-
berg.

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to its gigantic numerical amount. It comprised the Austrian corps of Bubna, Lichtenstein, and Giulay; the Würtembergers under their Prince-Royal; the Bavarians and German confederates under Marshal Wrede; the Austrian guards and reserves commanded by Prince Hesse-Homburg; and the Confederates under Prince Philippe of Hesse-Homburg and Count Hochberg. But though these German troops were little short of two hundred thousand combatants, and some of them were a noble array, yet the main strength of the army consisted in the Russian and Prussian guards, and the Russian reserves under the Grand Duke Constantine and Count Milaradowitch. These magnificent troops, nearly forty thousand strong, the very flower and pride of the Allied host, with the Russian corps of Wittgenstein, twenty thousand more, all bronzed veterans who had gone through the war of 1812, formed a reserve, in itself a powerful army, which in the end operated with decisive effect upon the fate of the campaign. This immense body was destined to act on the side of Switzerland and Franche-Comté, where there were no fortresses, excepting Besançon, Huningen, and Sarre Louis, to arrest the progress of an invading army. But though the line of its invasion was thus comparatively smooth, and it was so formidable from its numerical strength and the quality of a part of its force, this huge array was seriously paralysed by the presence of the Allied sovereigns at its headquarters, by the consequent subordination of military movements to diplomatic negotiation, by the known aversion of the Austrian cabinet to pushing matters with Napoleon to extremities, and by the cautious and circumspect character of its commander-in-chief.¹

¹ Schoell, x.
378, 379.
Plothe, iii.
Beil, i.

59.
Strength and
composition
of the army
of Silesia.

The second army, still called the army of Silesia, under the orders of Blucher, was composed of four veteran corps, of which two were Prussian under the command of York and Kleist, and two Russian under the direction of Langeron and Sacken. To these had recently been added two corps of German Confederates, one commanded by the Electoral Prince of Hesse-Cassel, and the other by the Duke of Saxe-Coburg. The total amount of this army was one hundred and thirty-seven thousand, of which upwards of fifty thousand were Russians inured to

war, and flushed with victory, and nearly forty thousand were Prussian conscripts burning with the ardour of the war of deliverance. This army was stationed on the north-eastern frontier of France, between Mayence and Coblenz, and threatened it on the side of the Vosges mountains and Champagne. In that quarter, though a double line of formidable fortresses guarded the frontier, yet, if they were blockaded, no natural barrier of any strength was interposed, after the Rhine was passed, between that river and Paris; and a vigorous invasion might with certainty be anticipated from the admirable quality of the troops of which the army was composed, and the well-known enterprising character of its chief.¹

The third army which was destined to co-operate in the invasion of France, was under the command of the Prince-Royal of Sweden. It comprised the Russian corps of Winzingerode, and the Prussian of Bulow, each of which was thirty thousand strong; the corps of German confederates under the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, and that commanded by the Duke of Brunswick, each also numbering thirty thousand combatants; fifteen thousand of Walmoden's men; the Swedish auxiliaries, twenty thousand; and nine thousand English, who took a part in the campaign on the banks of the Scheldt. This army mustered in all one hundred and seventy-four thousand combatants, of whom a hundred and twenty thousand, after deducting the sick and troops blockading the garrisons, might be relied on for operations in the field. But although this army was thus formidable in point of numerical amount, and the Russian and Prussian corps which it comprised were second to none in experience and valour, yet the positions of the troops, the variety of nations of which they were composed, and the peculiar political situation of their commander-in-chief, rendered it doubtful whether they would render any very efficient services in the course of the campaign. They lay on the Lower Rhine, between Cologne and Düsseldorf; with the iron barrier of the Netherlands, still in the enemy's hands, right in their front. And though a large proportion of the fortresses of which it was composed were unarmed or ill-provisioned, yet others, particularly Antwerp, might be expected to make a formidable defence, and would require to be besieged by considerable forces. The abilities of Berna-

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¹ Plotho, iii.
Beil, ii.
Schoell, x.
380, 381.

60.
Army of the
Crown
Prince of
Sweden.

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¹ Plotho, iii.
Beil. iii.
Schoell, x.
381, 382.

61.
The Allied
reserves.

² Schoell, x.
381, 382.
Plotho, iii.
Beil, iv.

dotte were unquestionable, and he had, on more than one occasion, rendered important services in the course of the preceding campaign; yet his disinclination, in itself natural and unavoidable, to push matters to extremity against his old country and comrades, was very apparent: and the hopes which he in secret cherished, of being called, on the fall of the present dynasty, to the throne of France rendered him in the last degree unwilling to be associated in the minds of its people with the days of their national humiliation or disaster.¹

Independent of these immense armies, the Allied powers had collected, or were collecting, a variety of reserves, which in themselves constituted a mighty host. They consisted of the Austrian reserve, twenty thousand strong, under the Archduke Ferdinand of Würtemberg; the Russians who were before Hamburg, to the number of fifty thousand, under Benningsen; the Russian reserve, commanded by Labanoff, of fifty thousand, who were mustering in Poland; the Prussian landwehr, engaged in the blockade of the fortresses on the Elbe and the Oder, to the number of fifty thousand more; the Prussian reserve, twenty thousand strong, who were assembling in Westphalia, under Prince Louis of Hesse-Homburg; and the Russian and Prussian force blockading Glogau, in number about fifteen thousand—in all two hundred and thirty-five thousand; which, with the three grand armies of Schwartzberg, Blücher, and the Crown Prince of Sweden, already assembled on the frontier of the Rhine; eighty thousand Austrians, who, under Marshal Bellegarde, were destined to act in the north of Italy; and a hundred and forty thousand British, Portuguese, and Spaniards, who, under the guidance of Wellington, were assailing the south of France, in Bearn, and on the frontier of Catalonia,—formed a mass of A MILLION AND TWENTY-EIGHT THOUSAND MEN, who were prepared to act against the empire of Napoleon.^{1*} A stupendous

* Viz. Grand Army under Schwartzberg,	261,650
Army of Silesia under Blücher,	137,391
Army of the North under Bernadotte,	174,000
Russian, Prussian, and Austrian Reserves,	235,000
Austrians in Italy under Bellegarde,	80,000
British and Portuguese in France,	78,000
Anglo-Sicilian and Spanish armies in Catalonia,	62,000

Total acting against France, 1,028,041

—SCHOELL, *Traité de Paix*, x. 382. 383.—For a detailed account of this immense force, see Appendix C, Chap. lxxxiv.

force! such as had never before been directed against any power in the annals of human warfare; formidable alike from its discipline, its experience, and the immense train of military munitions with which it was furnished; animated by the highest spirit, united by the strongest bonds; stimulated alike by past suffering and present victory; and guided by sovereigns and generals, who, trained in the school of misfortune, were at length cordially united in the resolution, at all hazards, to terminate the fatal military preponderance of the French empire.¹

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¹ Plottho, iii.
App. Schoell,
x. 381, 382.

To oppose this crusade Napoleon had a most inadequate force at his disposal. Not that he had not used the utmost exertions, and made use of the most rigorous means, to recruit his armies; or that his conscriptions on paper did not exhibit a most formidable array of combatants. But the physical strength and moral constancy of his empire were alike exhausted, and his vast levies now brought but a trifling accession of men to his standards. Since the 1st of September 1812, that is, during a period of sixteen months, he had obtained from the senate successive conscriptions to the amount of twelve hundred and sixty thousand men, in addition to at least eight hundred thousand who were enrolled beneath his banners at the commencement of that period. Of this immense force, however, embracing on paper above *two millions* of combatants, hardly two hundred and fifty thousand could now be assembled for the defence of the empire; and of these not more than two hundred thousand could by any possibility be brought forward in the field. Nearly five hundred thousand had perished or been made prisoners in the Russian campaign: three hundred thousand in the war in Saxony; two hundred and fifty thousand had disappeared in the two last Peninsular campaigns; nearly a hundred thousand were shut up in the fortresses on the Elbe or the Oder: a still greater number had sunk under the horrors of the military hospitals in the interior; and the great levy of five hundred and eighty thousand in October and November 1813, had,—from the failure of the class to which it applied,² in consequence of the conscription having now reached the *sons* of the generation, the mass of which had been cut

62.
Napoleon's
forces to
oppose the
invasion.

² Fain,
Camp. de
1814, 28, 31.
Schoell, x.

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off by the dreadful campaigns of 1793 and 1794,—proved so unproductive, that the Emperor could not, with the utmost exertions, reckon upon the support of more than three hundred and fifty thousand men in the field, to defend the frontiers of his wide-spread dominions, and make head on the Rhine, on the Jura, and on the Garonne, against such a multitude of enemies.

63.
Distribution
of Napoleon's
forces.

Such as they were, these forces were thus distributed. Sixty thousand men were blockaded in Hamburg, Magdeburg, and Torgau; and forty thousand in the fortresses on the Oder, the Vistula, in Holland, and Italy; fifty thousand, under Eugene, in Italy, maintained a painful defensive against the Austrians under Marshal Hiller; while a hundred thousand under Soult and Suchet, in Bearn and Catalonia, struggled against the superior armies of Wellington and Bentinck. The real body of men, however, which the Emperor had at his disposal to resist the invasion of the Allies on the Rhine, did not exceed a hundred and ten thousand combatants, and this force was scattered over an immense line, above five hundred miles in length, from the Alps to the frontiers of Holland, so that at no period of the campaign could he collect above sixty thousand combatants at a single point. Agreeably to his usual system, of never acknowledging in his actions the reality of his resources, and possibly in the hope of deceiving his enemies, this comparatively diminutive host was divided into eight corps. But they were the mere skeleton of the Grand Army, and many of the regiments could not muster two hundred bayonets.¹

¹ Vaud, i.
116, 117.
Koch, i. 47,
48. Plötho,
iii. v. App.

64.
Their posi-
tions on the
Rhine and
Rhône.

Victor, with nine thousand infantry, and three thousand five hundred horse, guarded the line of the Rhine from Bâle to Strasbourg; Marmont, with ten thousand foot and twelve hundred cavalry, was stationed along the same river from Strasbourg to Mayence. That important fortress itself, with the observation of the Rhine from thence to Coblenz, was intrusted to Count Morand, with eighteen thousand combatants. From thence to Nimeguen the frontier was guarded by Macdonald, with eighteen thousand infantry and three thousand cavalry; while Mortier, with the imperial guard and reserve cavalry, still mustering eleven thousand

infantry and seven thousand horse, lay on the Yonne. Ney, with his five divisions, hardly amounting to ten thousand foot soldiers, occupied the defiles of the Vosges mountains; and Augereau, with twelve thousand, was stationed at Lyons. Thus, not more than seventy-five thousand infantry, and fifteen thousand horse, could be relied on to withstand the shock of above three hundred and fifty thousand Allies, who could immediately be brought into action; and even after taking into view the reserves being formed in the interior, and the depots at Metz, Verdun, Paris, Troyes, and other places, to which every disposable sabre and bayonet was directed,—not more than a hundred and twenty thousand men could be mustered to withstand the threatened invasion, and of those little more than one-half could possibly be assembled in a single field of battle.^{1*}

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1813.

¹ Vaud. i.
116, 117.
Koch, Camp.
de 1814, i.
47, 49, 131,
132. Cap.
x. 331.
Ploto, iii.
Beil, v.

Notwithstanding their great superiority of force, the Allied sovereigns hesitated before they undertook the serious step of crossing the Rhine; and opinions were much divided as to the proper place where the passage should be attempted when the enterprise was resolved on. The physical weakness of the French empire, the exhausting effects of the long-continued drain upon its military population, the despair which had seized upon the minds of a large portion of its people, from the entire failure of the vast efforts they had made to maintain their external dominions, were in a great measure unknown to the Allied generals. They still regarded its frontiers with secret awe, as they had been accustomed to do, when Napoleon led forth his

65.
Hesitation of
the Allied
generals at
the idea of
invading
France.

* The aggregate of these forces was as follows :—

Blockaded in the fortresses on the Elbe,	-	-	-	60,000
in Holland, Italy, and on the Oder,	-	-	-	40,000
In Italy, under Eugene,	-	-	-	50,000
In Bearn, under Soult,	-	-	-	70,000
In Catalonia, under Suchet,	-	-	-	30,000
At Lyons, under Augereau,	-	-	-	12,000
Grand Army under Napoleon, viz :—				
Victor,	-	-	-	12,500
Marmont,	-	-	-	10,200
Morand,	-	-	-	18,000
Macdonald,	-	-	-	21,000
Mortier,	-	-	-	18,000
Ney,	-	-	-	10,000
				89,700
Reserves in the Interior,	-	-	-	30,000
				381,700

See KOCH, *Tableau*, No. iii. and iv., and VAUDONCOURT'S *Campagne de 1814*, i. 116, 117. See also Appendix D, Chap. lxxxiv.

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conquering bands to humble or subjugate every adjoining state. The catastrophes of two campaigns, how great soever, could not at once obliterate the recollection of twenty years of triumphs; and France, in its weakness, was now protected by the recollection of its departed greatness, as the Grand Army, at the close of the Moscow retreat, had been saved from destruction by the halo which played round the names of its marshals; or as the Lower Empire had so long been sheltered by the venerable letters on its standards, which, amidst the servility of Asiatic despotism, recalled the glorious recollections of the senate and people of Rome. Such was the influence of these feelings, that it required all the enthusiasm excited by the triumph of Leipsic, and all the personal influence and vigour in council of Alexander, to overcome the scruples of the Allied cabinets, and lead to the adoption of a plan for the campaign based upon an immediate invasion of France with the whole forces of the coalition.¹

¹ Danilefsky, Camp. of 1814, 10, 14. Lond. 215, 216.

66.
Plan of invasion proposed by Alexander, and agreed to by the Allied sovereigns.

It was at first proposed that Schwartzemberg's army should cross the Rhine, enter Switzerland near Bâle, and spread into Italy, to co-operate with the Austrian army in Lombardy under Bellegarde, while Blucher was to invade near Mayence; and the army of the north, under Bernadotte, threatened the northern frontier on the side of Flanders. But, though this plan was warmly approved by the cabinet of Vienna, which was more intent on effecting or securing the important acquisitions which seemed to lie open to its grasp in Italy, than on pushing matters to extremities against Napoleon and the grandson of the Emperor Francis; yet it by no means coincided with the views of Alexander, who was thoroughly convinced of the necessity of striking home at the centre of the enemy's power, and had in secret become assured, that no lasting accommodation could be looked for so long as that great warrior remained on the throne of France. He not only, therefore, strongly urged at Frankfort the immediate resumption of offensive measures on the most extended scale, before France had recovered from its consternation, or Napoleon had gained time to recruit his shattered forces; but proposed the plan of invasion, of all others the best calculated to concentrate the whole forces of the Alliance against the centre of the enemy's power,

and bring the war to an immediate and decisive issue. This plan consisted in moving the grand army, under Schwartzberg, into Switzerland, and causing it to enter France by the side of Bâle and the Jura, while Blucher moved direct from the neighbourhood of Mayence on Paris, and the Prince-Royal of Sweden penetrated through the fortresses of Flanders into Picardy and Artois. In this way, not only would France be assailed by the most powerful of the Allied armies on the Swiss frontier, where very few fortresses existed to check its advance; but each of the vast invading hosts would act on its own line of operations, had a ready retreat in case of disaster, and yet would be constantly converging towards a common centre, where the last and decisive blow was to be struck. It was a repetition, on a still greater scale, of the plans laid down for the preceding campaign in the conferences of Trachenberg; Switzerland being now the salient bastion which Bohemia had formerly been; and Blucher and Schwartzberg having nearly the correspondent posts assigned to them in Champagne and Flanders, which they had on the banks of the Elbe and the sands of Prussia.^{1*}

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¹ Dan. 14.
17. Alexander to
Bernadotte,
Oct. 29.
1813. Ibid.

* "Here," said Alexander, "is the plan proposed by me, and entirely approved by the Austrian and Prussian commanders-in-chief:—Offensive operations on the part of the grand army between Mayence and Strasbourg offer many difficulties, as we cannot leave the fortresses behind us without observation. By entering France on the side of Switzerland, we meet with incomparably fewer difficulties, that frontier not being so strongly fortified. Another advantage attending this movement is the possibility of turning the Viceroy's left wing, and thereby forcing him to a precipitate retreat. In that case, the Austrian army of Italy may advance on Lyons, so as to form a prolongation of our line, and, by means of its left wing, connect our operations with those of the Duke of Wellington, whose headquarters are now at Oleron. In the meantime, Blucher, with one hundred thousand men, may form an army of observation on the Rhine; and, without confining himself to observation, may cross that river near Manheim, and manœuvre against the enemy till the grand army reach the field of action. All the four armies—viz. the Grand army, that of Italy, Blucher, and Wellington, will stand on one line in the most fertile part of France, forming the segment of a circle. The four armies will push forward, and diminishing the arc, will thus draw near its centre—that is Paris, or the headquarters of Napoleon. Meantime your Royal Highness may advance on Cologne and Düsseldorf, and thence in the direction of Antwerp, by which you will separate Holland from France, and oblige Napoleon either to abandon that important fortress, or, if he endeavour to retain it, materially to diminish, by the numerous garrison which it will require, the effective strength of his armies. The grand object is not to lose a moment, that we may not allow Napoleon time to form and discipline an army, and furnish it with supplies, our business being to take advantage of the disorganised state of his forces. I entreat your Royal Highness not to lose a moment in putting your army in motion, in furtherance of the general plan of operations."—ALEXANDER TO BERNADOTTE, 29th October 1813; DANILEFSKY, *Camp. de 1814*, 17, 18. A grand design! very nearly what was ultimately carried into effect, and a memorable proof of the foresight and ability of the Russian Emperor, especially when it is recollected it was written only ten days after the battle of Leipsic.

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67.
Line of inva-
sion for
Schwartz-
enberg's army.

The advantages of this plan were so obvious, that it at once commanded the assent of the Allied generals; and, in the middle of December, the troops over the whole line were put in motion in order to carry it into effect. The grand army of Schwartzenberg lay close to Switzerland: that of Silesia extended along the line of the Rhine, from Manheim to Coblenz. The former was intended to enter France by the road through the Jura from Bâle, by Vesoul, to Langres,—a city of the highest importance in a strategical point of view, as being the place where several roads from the south-east and eastern frontier intersect each other. But the prodigious multitude of this army, which, after every deduction, was above two hundred thousand strong, could not advance by a single road, and it required to effect its ingress by all the routes leading across the Jura from Switzerland into France. It was divided, accordingly, into nine columns, which were directed to move by different roads towards Paris and the interior. The first, under Count Bubna, after entering Switzerland by Bâle, was to advance by Bearn and Neufchatel to Geneva, and thence descend the course of the Rhone to threaten Augereau, who occupied Lyons with twelve thousand men. The second, commanded by Count Giulay, was to move direct on the great road, through Montbeliard and Vesoul, to Langres.¹

¹ Vaud. i.
122. Dan.
21, 22.

68.
Lines by
which its
columns were
to advance
into France.

The third, under Lichtenstein, was intrusted with the blockade of Besançon, the only fortress of importance which required to be observed on the Jura and Swiss frontier. The fourth, under Colloredo, was to march on Langres, by Giulay's left, at the same time that it detached two divisions, or half its force, to blockade Auxonne, and advance by Dijon to Auxerre. The fifth, led by Hesse-Homburg, consisting of the Austrian reserves, followed on the same road through Dijon to Chatillon; while the sixth and seventh, under the Prince of Würtemberg and Marshal Wrede, who had now entirely recovered of his wound received at Hanau, were to cross the Rhine below Huningen, and at Bâle; and after leaving detachments to blockade the fortresses of Huningen, Befort, and New Brisach, move on by Colmar towards Nancy and Langres. Lastly, the eighth, under Barclay de Tolly, with the splendid Rus-

sian guards and reserves, was to take the direction from Bâle to Langres, as a reserve to Giulay and Wrede; and the ninth, under Wittgenstein, was to cross the Rhine at Fort Louis, below Strasbourg, and, after leaving detachments to observe Strasbourg and Landau, advance towards the Vosges mountains; and, after crossing them, take the direction of Nancy. Thus this great army was to be spread over an immense line nearly three hundred miles in breadth, from Strasbourg to Lyons, occupying the whole country between the Rhine and the Rhone; and how vast soever its forces might be, there was reason to fear that, from their great dispersion, no very powerful body could be collected on any one point, and that possibly its detached corps might be outnumbered by the comparatively diminutive, but more concentrated troops of the French Emperor.¹

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¹ Dan. 21.
23. Vaud. i.
122, 123.

Blucher's army, at the same time, received orders to prepare for active operations, and it was accordingly brought, about Christmas 1813, to the close vicinity of the Rhine, between Coblenz and Darmstadt. Unbounded had been the impatience of the ardent veteran at the delay of two months which had succeeded the advance of the Allies to the Rhine; and he never ceased to urge upon the Allied sovereigns that they should not give Napoleon time to recover from his defeats, but move with the utmost expedition across the Rhine to Paris. At the same time, however, with a caution which could hardly have been expected from his impetuous character, he dissembled his wishes, and, in the hope of throwing the enemy off their guard, spread abroad the report that the invasion of France was to take place on the side of Switzerland, and that he, much to his regret, was merely to maintain a defensive position on the right bank of the Rhine; and, with that view, he busily employed himself in purveying for the wants of his troops, as in winter quarters. At length, on the 26th December, the long wished for orders arrived, and the Prussian general immediately made preparations for concentrating his troops and crossing the Rhine. His instructions were of the simplest description—to cross the river, form the blockade of Mayence, and without heeding the other fortresses on the Moselle and the Meuse,² to push forward,

69.
Plan of
Blucher's
invasion.

² Vaud. i.
118, 119.
Dan. 23, 24.
Koch, i. 105,
106.

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70.
Plan of operations
assigned to
Bernadotte.

never halting, across France into Champagne, so as to be in readiness, by the 26th January, to join Prince Schwartzberg between Arcis and Troyes.

These were the armies which were destined to commence immediate operations for the invasion of France ; but the force of the Prince-Royal of Sweden was also concentrated on the Lower Rhine, and was intrusted with a subordinate, but very important part in the general plan of operations. It was well known that this ambitious prince, distracted between his obligations to the Allies, and his hopes of being advanced by them, upon Napoleon's fall, to the throne of France, was very much at a loss how to proceed, and felt great reluctance at engaging in any invasion which might imbitter the feelings of the French people against him, and endanger the brilliant prospects which he flattered himself were opening before him. Aware of these peculiarities in his situation, the Allied sovereigns assigned to Bernadotte and his powerful army the less obtrusive, but still important part of completing the conquest of Holland, delivering Flanders, besieging Antwerp, and, in general, pressing Napoleon on his north-eastern frontier. To co-operate in these important operations, so interesting to England, and involving the very matters connected with the Scheldt which had originally led to the war,* Sir Thomas Graham, who had returned to England on account of ill health after the passage of the Bidassoa, was despatched with nine thousand British troops to Holland, and landed at Rotterdam in the end of December. The movements of the Prince-Royal, however, were to the last degree tardy : it was long before his operations against the Danes in the north of Germany were concluded ; and all the ardour of the generals under his command could not bring forward his numerous columns to co-operate in the general attack upon France, until, fortunately for the common cause, the firmness of Lord Castlereagh overcame his repugnance, and two of his corps were brought up at the decisive moment to reinforce Marshal Blücher, and rendered the most important service to the cause of Europe.¹

¹ Lond. 27.
Dan. 18, 19.
Alexander to
Bernadotte.
Oct. 29,
1813.

The whole troops which were assembled for the final

* See *Ante*, Chap. ix. § 120.

operations of the war were animated with the highest spirit, and buoyant with the most sanguine expectations. More even than the awful catastrophe of the Moscow campaign, the result of the German contest had roused an enthusiasm, and spread a confidence among the Allied forces, which, under adequate guidance, rendered them invincible. The disasters of the French could no longer be ascribed to the cold. Inequality of numbers could not palliate repeated defeats on equal fields; unconquerable spirit in the patriot ranks, irresistible ardour in the commencement of the campaign, had evidently supplied the want of military experience, and overwhelming force had prostrated consummate talents at its close. Confidence, therefore, was now founded on solid grounds. The long-established military *prestige* of the imperial armies had passed over to the other side: it is by the last events that the opinion of the great bulk of men is always determined. To the ardent passion for liberation which had characterised the war of independence, had succeeded, now that the deliverance had been effected, another desire scarcely less general, and to warriors, perhaps, still more exciting; that of obliterating the recollection of former defeats by the magnitude of present triumphs, and making the enemy drain to the dregs the cup of humiliation he had so long held to their own lips.

Indescribable was the ardour which this passion awakened in the Allied ranks; all had wrongs to avenge, insults to retaliate, disgraces to efface; and all pressed on with equal eagerness to effect the hoped for consummation. The Russians were resolute to return at Paris the visit paid to them at Moscow—the Austrians to retaliate on the French the destruction of the ramparts of Vienna—the Prussians to replace the sword of the Great Frederick at Sans Souci, accompanied by the sabre of Napoleon from the Tuileries. In fine, the common feeling in the Allied armies at this period cannot be better expressed than in the words of Marshal Blücher, in a letter written on 31st December 1813:—"At daybreak to-morrow morning I shall cross the Rhine; but before doing so, I intend, together with my fellow-soldiers, to wash off in the waters of that proud river every trace of slavery.¹ Then, like free Germans, we shall set foot on the frontiers of

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71.
Feelings of
the Allied
armies at
this period.

72.

Extraordi-
nary enthu-
siasm which
prevailed.¹ Blücher to
his son,
Dec. 31,
1813.
Dan. 24.

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1813.

73.
Incipient
divisions
among the
Allied chiefs.

the great nation which is now so humble. We shall return as victors, not as vanquished, and our country will hail our arrival with gratitude. O! how soothing to us will be the moment when our kinsmen shall meet us with tears of joy!"

But although the forces of the alliance were thus vast, and the spirit of its armies thus elevated, no small anxiety pervaded the minds of its chiefs; and the great objects of the confederacy never were nearer being frustrated than when on the point of accomplishment. Success was already beginning to spread its usual seeds of discord among the sovereigns; separate interests were arising with the prospect of common spoil; ancient animosities reviving with the cessation of common danger. The Emperor of Austria, naturally solicitous for the continuance in the hands of his daughter and her descendants of the sceptre of France, had communicated to his cabinet an anxious desire to postpone, by all means in their power, the adoption of extreme measures against Napoleon; and the whole address of Metternich was employed to attain the object of humbling the once-dreaded conqueror sufficiently, to render him no longer formidable to his neighbours, and tractable to their wishes, without actually precipitating him from the throne. The Emperor of Russia, on the other hand, actuated by no such interest, more intimately acquainted with the character of the French Emperor, and smarting under the recollection of severe wrongs, both personal and national, which he had experienced at his hands, was strongly impressed with the necessity, at all hazards, of prosecuting the war with the utmost vigour against him; and never ceased to maintain, that it was by such means only that the peace of Europe could be secured, and the independence of the adjoining states placed on a solid foundation.

74.
Incipient
divisions
between
Russia,
Prussia, and
Austria.

In this opinion the King of Prussia, who, when he drew the sword, had thrown away the scabbard, and whose dominions lay immediately exposed to the first burst of returning vengeance on the part of Napoleon, entirely acquiesced. But still the weight of Austria, the talents of Metternich, and the necessity of not hazarding any thing which might break up the confederacy, rendered the adoption of the bolder game a matter of great

difficulty ; and more than once, in the course of the short campaign which followed, had well-nigh frustrated the principal objects of the alliance. The danger was the more imminent, that serious jealousies were already breaking out among the lesser powers in Germany, as to the manner in which their separate interests were to be arranged after the great debate of the Revolution had subsided : that the pretensions of Russia to Poland, of Prussia to Saxony, and of Austria to Italy, were already exciting no small disquietude among far-seeing statesmen ; and that even among the diplomatists of England, at the Allied headquarters, a considerable difference of opinion existed as to the course to be pursued in future ;— Lord Aberdeen deferring to the views of Metternich, that, to preserve a due equipoise in Europe, peace on reasonable terms should be concluded with the French Emperor ; and Sir Charles Stewart, with Lord Cathcart, being inclined to the bolder counsels of Lord Castlereagh, which tended to the entire dethronement of Napoleon, and held, that no lasting peace could be looked for in Europe without “the ancient race and the ancient territory” for the French nation.¹*

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¹ Lond. 241,
253. Dan.
3-10. Cap.
x. 335, 336,
366.

But, whatever germs of future division might be arising in the Allied councils, there was no stay in the moral torrent which now rolled with impetuous violence towards the French frontier, and no change in the noble sentiments with which their chiefs strove to animate their warriors. It was in these words that, on the eve of crossing the Rhine, Alexander thus addressed his troops :— “Warriors ! Your valour and perseverance have brought you from the Oka to the Rhine. We are about to cross that great river, and enter that proud country with which you have already waged such cruel and bloody war. Already

75.
Proclamation
of the
Emperor of
Russia to his
troops on
crossing the
Rhine.

* “If Napoleon were forced from the throne of France, much difference of opinion might exist on the great question of a successor. I was clearly of opinion, that the re-establishment of the Bourbons would be more acceptable to England than any other arrangement which could possibly be made. Others maintained that it might be policy to keep Buonaparte on the throne, with his wings clipped to the utmost, in preference to restoring the hereditary princes, who might again assume a sway similar to the times of Louis XIV., and become formidable alike to England and the powers on the Continent. The difficulty at this crisis consisted in fixing upon the fundamental principles to be adopted, and the points to be obtained ; and it seemed indispensable that the government of England should send their minister of foreign affairs to the theatre of action, as no one could act with the same advantages.”—LORD LONDONDERRY'S *War in Germany*, 244.

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LXXXIV.

1813.

have we saved our native land, covered it with glory, and restored freedom and independence to Europe. It remains but to crown these mighty achievements by the long wished for peace. May tranquillity be restored to the whole world ! May every country enjoy happiness under its own independent laws and government ! May religion, arts, science, and commerce, flourish in every land for the general welfare of nations ! This, and not the continuance of war and destruction, is our object. Our enemies, by piercing to the heart of our dominions, wrought us much evil : but dreadful was the retribution : the divine wrath crushed them. Let us not take example from them : inhumanity and ferocity cannot be pleasing in the eyes of a merciful God. Let us forget what they have done against us. Instead of animosity and revenge, let us approach them with the words of kindness, with the outstretched hand of reconciliation. Such is the lesson taught by our holy faith : Divine lips have pronounced the command, ‘Love your enemies ; do good to them that hate you.’ Warriors ! I trust that, by your moderation in the enemy’s country, you will conquer as much by generosity as by arms, and that, uniting the valour of the soldier against the armed, with the charity of the Christian towards the unarmed, you will crown your exploits by keeping stainless your well-earned reputation of a brave and moral people.”¹

¹ Dan. 15,
16.

76.
Reflections
on the moral
character of
the war.

Memorable words ! not merely as breathing the noble feelings of the sovereign, who thus, in the moment of victory, stayed the uplifted hand of conquest, and sought to avenge the desolation of Russia by the salvation of France ; but as indicating the spirit by which the contest itself was animated on the part of the Allies, and the strength of that moral reaction, which, based on the principles of religion, had now surmounted all the interests of time, and communicated its blessed spirit even to the stern warriors whose valour had delivered the world. When Napoleon crossed the Niemen, he addressed his followers in the words of worldly glory ; he struck the chord which could alone vibrate in the hearts of the children of the Revolution : he said of Russia, “Fate drags her on ; let her destinies be fulfilled.”* When Alexander

* See *Ante*, Chap. lxxi. § 73.

approached the Rhine, he spoke to his soldiers in the language of the Gospel ; he strove only to moderate the ferocity of war : he ascribed his victory to the arm of Omnipotence. Such was the spirit which conquered the Revolution : this it was, and not the power of intellect, which delivered the world ; and when Providence deemed the time arrived for crushing the reign of infidelity, the instruments of its will were not the forces of civilisation, but the fervour of the desert.

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1813.

“ — And now all earth
Had gone to wrack with ruin overspread,
Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits
Shrined in his Sanctuary of Heaven secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advised,
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son, avenged
Upon his enemies, and so declare
All power on him transferred.”

Paradise Lost, vi. 669.

CHAPTER LXXXV.

LAST STRUGGLE OF NAPOLEON IN FRANCE.
FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CAMPAIGN TO THE
ARMISTICE OF LUSIGNY.—JAN. 1—FEB. 18, 1814.

CHAP.
LXXXV.

1814.

1.
Remarkable
coincidence of
the passages of
the Rhine, in
the fall of the
Roman and
French
empires.
1 Gibbon,
ch. 30.

"ON the 31st December 406," says Gibbon, "the united and victorious army of the Suevi, the Vandals, and the Burgundians, crossed the Rhine, when its waters were most probably frozen, and entered without opposition the defenceless provinces of Gaul. This memorable passage of the Northern nations, who never afterwards retreated, may be considered as the fall of the Roman empire in the countries beyond the Alps; and the barriers which had so long separated the savage and civilised nations of the earth, were from that fatal moment levelled with the ground."¹ On that day fourteen hundred and seven years—at midnight on the 31st December 1813—the united and victorious army of the Russians, Prussians, and Austrians, at the same place crossed the same river; and that memorable passage may justly be regarded as the fall of the French empire beyond the Rhine! History has not preserved a more striking example of the influence of physical and lasting causes on the fortunes of the human species, or of that permanent attraction which, amidst all the varieties of religion, civilisation, language, and institutions, impels the brood of winter to the regions of the sun.

But if this extraordinary coincidence demonstrates the permanent influence of general causes on the migration and settlements of the species, the different character and effects of the two invasions, show the vast step which mankind had made in the interval of fourteen hundred

years which separated them. "The banks of the Rhine," continues the same author, "before the barbarians appeared, were crowned, like those of the Tiber, with elegant houses and well-cultivated farms; and if a poet descended the river, he might express his doubt on which side was situated the territory of the Romans. This scene of peace and plenty was suddenly changed into a desert, and the prospect of the smoking ruins could alone distinguish the solitude of nature from the desolation of man. The flourishing city of Mentz was surprised and destroyed, and many thousand Christians were inhumanly massacred in the church; Worms perished after a long and obstinate siege; Strasbourg, Spire, Rheims, Tournay, Arras, Amiens, experienced the cruel oppression of the German yoke; and the consuming flames of war spread from the banks of the Rhine over the greater part of the seventeen provinces of Gaul. That rich and extensive country, as far as the ocean, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, was delivered to the barbarians, who drove before them, in a promiscuous crowd, the bishop, the senator, and the virgin, laden with the spoils of their houses and altars."¹ The same provinces were invaded fourteen hundred years after by the confederated Austrians, Prussians, and Russians, the descendants of those whose track had been marked by such frightful devastation; but how different the inroad of the civilised and Christian from the rude and barbarian host! No sacked cities marked the progress of Alexander's march—no slaughter of unarmed multitudes bespoke the triumph of the Allied arms; the plough and the anvil plied their busy trade in the midst even of contending multitudes; and but for the occasional ruin of houses, or wasting of roads, on the theatre of actual conflict, the traveller would have been at a loss to tell where the track of invasion had passed.* The changes of time make no alteration on the durable causes which direct the progress of conquest, or determine the ultimate fate of empires; but they modify in the most important manner their spirit and effects. They have

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2.
Different
characters of
the two
invasions.

¹ Gibbon,
Ch. 30.

* A few weeks after hostilities had ceased, the author visited the theatre of war at Paris, and in Champagne, especially in the vicinity of Soissons, Craone, and Laon, the scene of such obstinate and repeated conflicts in March 1814, no traces of devastation were to be seen, except a few burnt houses and loop-holed walls in the place where severe fighting had actually occurred.

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LXXXV.

1813.

3.

Passage of
the Rhine
and invasion
of France.
Dec. 31,
1813.

not averted the sword of northern valour, but they have tempered its blade, and mitigated its devastation.

On the 26th December, orders were secretly despatched to the different corps of Blücher, communicating the time and place of crossing the Rhine; and the troops were brought up on the succeeding day to their respective points of destination. Sacken was to effect his passage near Mannheim, by means of a flotilla which had been collected at the confluence of the Neckar; York and Langeron, on a bridge of boats at Caubé, near Bacharach; while St Priest was to force his way across opposite to Coblenz, by means of the boats on the Lahn, and by the aid of the island of Niederworth, opposite to that town. During the night of the 31st, Sacken's corps, which had the King of Prussia at its headquarters, assembled at the spot where the Neckar falls into the Rhine. On the opposite bank was a redoubt, which commanded the mouth of that river and the town of Mannheim, and which it was necessary to carry before a bridge of boats could be established. At four on the following morning, a party of Russian light infantry was embarked in boats and rafts; and, favoured by the thick darkness, succeeded in crossing to within a few yards of the opposite bank before they were discovered. The French immediately opened a vigorous fire of cannon and musketry, and successive detachments of the Russians required to be brought over before the work could be carried; while the bright flashes of the guns illuminated the opposite bank, and displayed the dense masses of the invaders on the German shore, crowding down to the water's edge, burning with ardour, but in silent suspense awaiting the issue of the enterprise. At length the redoubt was carried at the fourth assault; and its garrison, consisting of three hundred men, were made prisoners. The rising sun showed the Russians established on French ground, and in possession of the intrenchment. Strains of martial music, resounding from all the regiments, now filled the air; the King of Prussia, coming up to the victors, was greeted with loud cheers, and the passage proceeded without interruption. By six o'clock in the evening the pontoon bridge was completed, and the whole corps passed over; while at the same time Blücher

in person, with Langeron and York, crossed the Rhine without opposition at Caubé, and St Priest effected his passage at Coblentz with very little fighting. In one of the squares of the city, the prefect, on the occupation of Moscow by the French, in 1812, had erected a monument, with the inscription, "In honour of the immortal campaign of 1812." Colonel Mardenke, who had been appointed Russian commander of Coblentz, left the monument untouched, but under the inscription caused the following words to be written—"Seen and approved by the Russian commander of Coblentz in 1814."¹*

The grand army under Schwartzenberg had entered the French territory at a still earlier period. On the night of the 20th December, six Austrian columns passed the Rhine, between Schaffhausen and Bâle, and immediately inundated the adjacent districts of Switzerland and France. This immense body, above two hundred thousand strong, shortly after pursued, under their different leaders, their respective destinations. Bubna, with his corps, which was the left wing, marched by the flat country of Switzerland towards Geneva; Hesse-Homburg, Colloredo, Prince Louis of Lichtenstein, with Giulay and Bianchi, forming the centre, took the great road by Vesoul towards Langres; while Wrede, the Prince-Royal of Würtemberg, and Wittgenstein, with their respective corps, which composed the right wing of the army, crossed below Bâle, between that town and Strasbourg, and moved across Lorraine and Franche-Comté, until they arrived abreast of the centre on the road to Langres. None of these corps met with any opposition. Victor, who had not above ten thousand combatants at his disposal, after providing for the garrisons of the fortresses on the Upper Rhine,² was unable to oppose any effective barrier to such a

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¹ Dan. 25.
26. Koch,
106, 107. i.
Vaud. i. 129.
Fain, 24.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
174, 177.
Plottho, iii.
33, 36.

4.
Entrance of
Prince
Schwarzen-
berg into
Switzerland
and the Jura.
Dec. 21.

² Koch, i.
74, 82.
Dan. 20, 21.
Vaud. i. 120,
124. Die
Grosse
Chron. ii. 71.
Plottho, iii.
24, 28.

* The inscriptions in the square in front of the church of St Castor in Coblentz, are in these lines :—

AN. MDCCCXII.

MEMORABLE POUR LA CAMPAGNE.

CONTRE LES RUSSES,

SOUS LA PREFECTURE DE JULES DOAZAN.

VU ET APPROUVE PAR NOUS COMMANDANT RUSSE DE LA VILLE DE COBLENZ.

1 JAN., 1814.

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1814.

prodigious inundation ; it spread almost without resistance over the whole level country of Switzerland, and, surmounting the passes of the Jura, poured with fearful violence into the plains of Lorraine.

5.
March of the
different
columns.
Dec. 30.
Jan. 3.

The march of the different columns met with hardly any interruption. Count Bubna arrived in ten days before Geneva, which capitulated at once, the garrison being permitted to retire into France. After occupying that city, he sent out detachments, which made themselves masters, with as much ease, of the passes of the Simplon and the Great St Bernard, thus interposing entirely between France and Italy, and cutting off the communication between Napoleon's forces and those of the Viceroy on the plains of Lombardy. The French garrison retired to Lyons, whither they were followed, early in January, by the Austrian commander, who, however, did not deem himself in sufficient strength to attack Augereau, who was now at the head of fifteen thousand men in that important city. He contented himself, therefore, with observing the town at a little distance, and occupying the whole course of the Ain from the Lake of Geneva to its walls. Meanwhile the centre, in great strength, pressed forward on the high-road from Bâle to Paris, by Montbeliard, Vesoul, and Langres.

Jan. 17.

Jan. 7, 9, 11,
and 13.

Vesoul was entered early in January ; Besançon, Belfort, Huningen, were invested a few days afterwards ; while Victor, wholly unable to withstand the concentrated masses of five corps of the enemy, numbering eighty thousand sabres and bayonets in their ranks, and finding himself inadequate to the task assigned him by Napoleon, of defending the passes of the Vosges mountains, fell back, after some inconsiderable skirmishes, towards the plains of Champagne. In vain Mortier was ordered up by the Emperor to support him on the road to Paris by Troyes : even their united forces were inadequate to make head against the enemy ; and on the 16th the important town of Langres, the most valuable, in a strategetical point of view, in the whole east of France, from the number of roads of which it commands the intersection, was abandoned by the two marshals, and immediately taken possession of by the Allied forces.¹

¹ Jan. 17.
Fain, 23, 25.
Koch, i. 80,
87. Vaud. i.
151, 153.
Dan. 21, 22.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
98, 117.
Clausewitz,
vii. 327.

While the south-eastern provinces of France were thus

overrun by the Allies under Schwartzenberg, the progress of the army of Silesia, led by the impetuous Blucher on the side of Mayence, was not less alarming. The cordon of troops opposed to them, in no condition to withstand such formidable masses, fell back at all points towards the Vosges mountains. Marmont, who had the chief command in that quarter, retired on the 3d of January to Kayserslautern, so often the theatre of sanguinary conflict in the earlier periods of the war: Unable, however, to maintain himself there, he retreated behind the Sarre, the bridges of which were blown up, and shortly after took a defensive position between Sarre-Louis and Sarre-quemines. But the two corps of York and Sacken having concentrated in his front, he did not feel himself in sufficient strength to withstand an attack, and resumed his retrograde movement toward the Moselle. Blucher upon this divided his army into two parts, York being intrusted with the pursuit of Marmont, and the observation of the powerful fortresses of Metz, Thionville, and Luxembourg; while he himself, with Sacken's corps, marched to and occupied the opulent and beautiful city of Nancy, the keys of which he sent, with a warm letter of congratulation, to the Emperor Alexander. Meanwhile Langeron, with his numerous corps, forming not the least important part of the army of Silesia, having crossed the Rhine at Bingen on the 3d, had completed the investment of Mayence and Cassel, detaching only one of his divisions, that of Olsoofief, to support his veteran commander. But Blucher himself, burning with ardour, advanced with indefatigable activity, though the force under his immediate command was reduced, by the numerous detachments and fortresses to be blockaded in his rear, to less than thirty thousand men. With this inconsiderable body, wholly composed, however, of Russian veterans, he not only opened up a communication by his left with the grand army at Langres, but himself pushed on to Brienne, which he occupied in force. His advanced column was even moved forward to St Dizier, which was taken after a sharp conflict with Marmont's rearguard.¹

Thus, in twenty-five days after the invasion of the French territory had commenced, the Allied armies had

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6.
Operations of
the army of
Silesia.

Jan. 3.

Jan. 7.

Jan. 9.

Jan. 25.

¹ Dan. 27,

28. Vaud.

148, 151.

Koch, i. 107,

125. Die

GrosseChron.

ii. 90, 96.

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1814.

7.
General re-
sult of these
movements.

succeeded, almost without firing a shot, in wresting a third of it from the grasp of Napoleon. The army of Silesia had conquered the whole country from the Rhine to the Marne, crossed the former frontier stream, as well as the Sarre, the Moselle, and the Meuse; passed the formidable defiles of the Vosges and Hundsruock mountains, and finally descended into the open and extensive plains of Champagne. Schwartzenberg's forces had in a month crossed the upper Rhine, and traversed part of Switzerland, surmounted the broad and lofty ridge of the Jura, and wound in safety through its devious and intricate valleys; overrun the whole of Franche-Comté, Lorraine, and Alsace, descended into the plains of Burgundy, and entered into communication, by means of its right wing, with the army of Silesia, along the valley of the Meuse, while its left had occupied Geneva and the defiles of the Ain, and threatened Lyons on the banks of the Rhone. Thus their united forces stretched in an immense line, three hundred miles in length, in a diagonal direction across France, from the frontiers of Flanders to the banks of the Rhone. All the intermediate country in their rear, embracing a third of the old monarchy, and comprehending its most warlike provinces, was occupied, its fortresses blockaded, and its resources lost; and the vast masses of the Allies were converging from the south-east and north to the plains of Champagne, and the vicinity of Chalons. That town had been already immortalised by the dreadful battle, decisive of the fate of Europe, which had taken place there, fourteen hundred years before, between Attila and the forces of the Roman empire under Aetius—a striking proof of the permanent operation of those general causes which, amidst every variety of civilisation and military skill, and in every era of the world, bring the contending hosts which are to determine its destinies to the same theatres of conflict.¹

¹ Koch, i. 125. Dan. 29, 34. Vaud. i. 147, 155. Die Grosse Chron. ii. 54, 76.

8.
Movements
of the army
of Berna-
dotte.

The army of the Crown Prince of Sweden, which threatened France on the side of Flanders, though not so far advanced as the hosts of Blucher and Schwartzenberg, was still making some progress, and caused sensible disquiet to the French Emperor. Of that army only three corps were ready to take a part in the war; the remainder, with the Crown Prince himself, who was in

no hurry to approach the theatre of final conflict, being still in Holstein, or the neighbourhood of that duchy. These three corps, however, were slowly advancing to the scene of action: the first, commanded by the Duke of Saxe-Weimar, had crossed the Lech at Arnheim, and was moving through Flanders; another, under Bulow, was before Antwerp, where it was supported by a body of nine thousand British troops under Sir Thomas Graham; and part of a third, under Winzingerode, was at Düsseldorf, on the Rhine. But the remainder did not reach France till the middle of February. Chernicheff, who commanded Winzingerode's advanced guard, was burning with anxiety to cross the river; and at length, though with no small difficulty, extracted a reluctant consent from his more circum-spect commander to attempt the passage at the confluence of the Roer. It was effected with little difficulty on the 12th January: the French, astonished at the boldness of the enterprise—undertaken in open day, of crossing a broad river surcharged with masses of ice, in the front of armed redoubts—opposing hardly any resistance.¹

Winzingerode's corps now slowly advanced towards Brussels: and Macdonald, who commanded the French forces in that quarter, fell back with his troops in all directions. Juliers was speedily evacuated, Liege was soon after blockaded, and in a few days taken by the Cossacks; while Macdonald abandoned all the country between Brussels and the Rhine, and concentrated his forces at Namur. A division of three thousand foot and six hundred horse, despatched by General Maison from Antwerp, to endeavour to drive the Cossacks out of Liege, was defeated after an obstinate engagement at Saint Tron, near the gates of that city, by Benkendorf and Chernicheff; a success which not only secured the possession of the town, but, what was of still more importance, gave the Allies the command of the passage of the Meuse. Discouraged by this check, General Maison made no further attempt to retard the advance of the enemy: Macdonald retired, in obedience to the commands of Napoleon, towards Laon, abandoning all the open country of Flanders to the enemy, and leaving Antwerp to its own resources. Namur was immediately occupied by Winzingerode, but he was compelled to halt there some days, in consequence of the small

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Jan. 12.
¹ Dan. 29,
32. Koch, i.
127, 132.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii. 80.
84. Plötho,
iii. Beil. 16.

9.
Which occu-
pies Flan-
ders, and
advances
towards
Laon.
Jan. 15.
Jan. 18.

Jan. 24.

Jan. 26.

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¹ Koch, l.
127, 135.
Dan. 29, 33.
Plotho, iii.
39, 47.

amount of force, now reduced to thirteen thousand men, which the necessity of blockading so many places in his rear left at his disposal. Bulow meanwhile formed the blockade of Antwerp, and Macdonald was rapidly falling back towards Laon and Chalons ; so that the whole forces of the Allies occupied a vast line, above five hundred miles in length, extending from Antwerp by Namur, Brienne, Langres, and Auxonne, to Lyons, from the banks of the Scheldt to those of the Rhone.¹

10.
General
result of these
operations.

Thus, within a month after they had commenced the invasion of the French territory, the Allies had gained in appearance, and in one sense in reality, very great advantages, without either sustaining loss or experiencing resistance. Above a third of France had been conquered ; the resources of that large portion of his dominions in men and money were not only lost to Napoleon, but, in part at least, gained to the invaders. The *prestige* of his invincibility was seriously lessened by so wide an inroad upon the territory of the great nation. But, on the other hand, to a commander possessed of the military talent and discerning eye of the French Emperor, his situation, though full of peril, was not without its advantages, and he might with reason hope to strike, upon the plains of Champagne, strokes equal to the redoubtable blows which first laid the foundation of his fame on the Italian plains. The force at his disposal, though little more than a third of that which was at the command of the Allies, was incomparably more concentrated. His troops were all stationed within the limits of a narrow triangle, of which Paris, Laon, and Troyes, formed the angles ; while the vast armies of his opponents, stretching across France from the Scheldt to the Rhone, were alike unable either to combine their movements with accuracy, or to succour each other in case of disaster. The views of the cabinets which directed them were by no means in unison. Austria, leaning on the matrimonial alliance, was reluctant to push matters to extremities, if it could by possibility be avoided ; Russia and Prussia, influenced by no such connexion, were resolute to push on, at all hazards, to Paris ; while the councils of England, which in this diversity held the balance, were divided between the expedience of taking advantage of the present com-

manding position of the Allied armies to secure a glorious peace, and the chance, by pursuing a more decided policy, of precipitating the revolutionary dynasty from the throne. Thus it might reasonably be expected that the military councils of the Allied cabinets would be as ruinous as their diplomatic divisions; and Napoleon entertained sanguine hopes that, while the Austrians, in pursuance of the temporising system of Metternich, hung back, the Russians and Prussians, led by the bolder views of Alexander and Blücher, might be exposed to attack with equal chances, and possibly at an advantage.¹

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¹ Dan. 33,
34. Koch, i.
135, 136.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
175, 194.

An attentive observer of the prodigious flood of enemies which was inundating his territories, Napoleon was, during the first three weeks of January 1814, indefatigable in his efforts to prepare the means of arresting it. He was first informed of the invasion of his territories when coming out of his cabinet on his way to the meeting of the legislative body, which has been already described.* Preserving his usual firmness, he said: "If I could have gained two months, the enemy would not have crossed the Rhine. This may lead to bad consequences; but alone I can do nothing: if unaided, I must fall; then it will be seen that the war is not directed against me alone." His exertions were mainly employed in organising and despatching to the different armies the conscripts who were daily forwarded to Paris from the southern and western provinces of the empire, and replacing the garrisons in the interior from which they were drawn by National Guards, or levies who had not yet acquired any degree of military consistency. These troops, as they successively arrived, were reviewed with great pomp in the Place Carrousel; but their number fell miserably short of expectation, and evinced in the clearest manner that the military strength of the empire was all but exhausted.²

11.
Preparations
of Napoleon
to mar the
invasion.

² Thib. ix.
480, 481.
Fain, 26, 27.
Moniteur,
Dec. 1, 1813,
to Jan. 24,
1814.

The better to conceal his real weakness, and in the hope of imposing at once on his own subjects and his enemies, the most pompous account of these reviews was uniformly published next day in the *Moniteur*; and the numbers who had defiled before the Emperor announced

12
His devices to
conceal his
real weak-
ness.

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxxiv. § 27.

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at four or five times their real amount; insomuch that, in a single month, more than two hundred thousand men were enumerated, and it would have been supposed the Emperor was about to take the field with a force as great as that with which he had combated the preceding year on the Elbe. But no one knew better than the Emperor the real amount of the troops at his disposal; and the moment they had defiled before the windows of the Tuileries, every sabre and bayonet was straightway hurried off to the armies in front of the Allies, which, according to old usage, were divided into eight corps, though they did not in all muster above a hundred thousand effective combatants in the field. Yet so great was his dread, even in this extremity, of democratic excitement, that it was only on the 8th of January—a fortnight before he set out to take the command of the army—that, by a decree, he again organised a National Guard in Paris. Even when he did so, especial care was taken, by the nomination of Marshal Monecy to the command, and by the selection made both of officers and privates to fill its ranks, to show that it was established rather to guard against internal agitation than foreign aggression, and that the real enemy it was intended to combat was to be found, not in the bayonets of the Allies, but in the pikes of the Faubourg St Antoine.¹

¹ Fain, 26,
27. Thib. ix.
481. Cap. x.
331, 332.
Moniteur,
Dec. 1, 1813,
to Jan. 24,
1814.

13.
Napoleon's
final disposi-
tions before
setting out
for the army.
Jan. 20.

Jan. 23.

Jan. 24.

Previous to setting out to take the command of his troops, Napoleon made his final dispositions for the government during his absence from the capital. To announce his immediate arrival with the army, he sent forward Berthier some days before he himself set out, and meanwhile he organised with Savary and the Council of State the means of maintaining tranquillity in the capital, and insuring the direction of affairs. The regency was conferred by letters patent on the Empress Marie Louise; but with her was conjoined on the day following his brother Joseph, under the title of lieutenant-general of the empire. On the 23d he prepared a military solemnity, calculated to rouse the national feelings in the highest degree. It was Sunday—and, after hearing mass, the Emperor received the principal officers of the National Guard in the apartments of the Tuileries. The Empress

preceded him on entering the apartments; she was followed by Madame de Montesquieu, who carried in her arms the King of Rome, then a lovely infant of three years of age. His blue eyes and light hair bespoke his German descent; but the keen look and thoughtful turn of countenance betrayed the mingled Italian blood. He wore the uniform of the National Guard, his golden locks fell in luxuriant ringlets over his rounded shoulders, and his little eyes beamed with delight at the military garb in which he was now for the first time arrayed.¹

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1814.

¹ Fain, 44.
Cap. x. 534.

Napoleon took the child by the hand, and advancing into the middle of the circle, with his head uncovered and a solemn air, he thus addressed them:—"Gentlemen, I am about to set out for the army: I intrust to you what I hold dearest in the world—my wife and my son. Let there be no political divisions: let the respect for property, the maintenance of order, and, above all, the love of France, animate every bosom. I do not disguise, that, in the course of the military operations which are to ensue, the enemy may approach in force to Paris: it will only be an affair of a few days; before they have elapsed I shall be on their flanks and rear, and annihilate those who have dared to violate our country." Then, taking the noble child in his arms, he went through the ranks of the officers and presented him to them as their future sovereign. Cries of enthusiasm rent the apartments: many tears were shed; a sense of the solemnity of the moment penetrated every bosom, and cold, indeed, must have been that heart which did not then thrill with patriotic ardour. The apartment where this memorable scene occurred was the same which, twenty years before, had witnessed the degradation of Louis XVI., when that unhappy monarch had been compelled to put on the red cap of liberty, and Napoleon had witnessed with such indignation the tumultuous assemblage which thronged the gardens of the Tuileries.* On the following day Napoleon made all the necessary preparations for his departure, burned his most secret papers, and gave his final instructions to Joseph and the Council of State.² At three in the morning of the 25th, he em-

^{14.}
His touching
speech to the
National
Guard at
Paris.

² Fain, 44,
45. Cap. x.
534, 535.
Moniteur,
Jan. 25,
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* *Ante*, Chap. vii. § 71 *et seq.*

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15.
Arrival of
the Emperor
at Chalons,
and his first
measures
there.

braced the Empress and his son FOR THE LAST TIME, and set out for the army. He never saw them again. Revolution had run its course ; in the very spot where its excesses commenced, its chief began to drink the bitterest draught of the waters of affliction.

Count Bertrand, in the absence of Berthier, accompanied Napoleon in his carriage ; they breakfasted at Chateau-Thierry, and arrived in the afternoon at Chalons-sur-Marne, where the headquarters of the army were established. The presence of the Emperor, as usual, restored confidence both to the troops and the inhabitants, which the long-continued retreat and near approach of the enemy to the capital had much impaired. Cries of "Vive l'Empereur" broke from the crowds which assembled to witness his passage through any of the towns which he traversed ; with them were mingled the exclamation, "A bas les droits réunis." They did not cry "A bas la conscription"—a deplorable proof of the selfishness of human nature ; they strove rather to save their own money than the blood of their children. Napoleon spent the evening in receiving accounts from his officers of the position of the troops and the progress of the enemy. They were sufficiently alarming. The grand army of Prince Schwartzberg, descending by several roads from the Vosges mountains, was pressing in vast numbers through the plains of Burgundy, and already threatened Troyes, the ancient capital of Champagne ; Blucher had passed Lorraine, reached St Dizier, and was rapidly stretching, in communication with the grand army, across to the Aube. The French troops, falling back on all sides, were converging towards Chalons ; Victor and Ney, after having evacuated Nancy, had already reached Vitry-le-Français : while Marmont was between Saint Michel and Vitry, behind the Meuse. Twenty days of continued retreat had brought those scattered bands, which lately had lain along the line of the Rhine, from Huningen to Bâle, to within a few leagues of each other, in the plains of Champagne. Disorder and confusion, as usual in such cases, were rapidly accumulating in the rear. Crowds of fugitives, which preceded the march of the columns, crossed and spread consternation among the advancing bodies of conscripts which were hastening up from Paris ;¹

¹ Fain, 61,
66. Vaud.
i. 176, 179.
Jom. iv. 524,
525. Die
Grosse Chron
ii. 206, 213.

and already that dejection was visible among all ranks, which is at once the forerunner and the cause of national disaster.

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By the concentration of the retiring columns, however, Napoleon had collected about seventy thousand effective combatants, of whom fifteen thousand were admirable cavalry; and, although part of these were still at a considerable distance from the centre of action, yet he wisely resolved at once to assume the offensive. Twelve hours only were devoted to rest and preparation at Chalons, and on the 26th headquarters were advanced to Vitry. Early on the following morning the march was resumed; and at daybreak the advanced guards met the leading Cossacks of Blücher's army, which were moving from St Dizier, where they had passed the night, towards Vitry. The Russians, wholly unprepared for any such encounter, were taken at a disadvantage, and worsted. The victorious French, with loud shouts, re-entered St Dizier, which had been some days in the hands of the Allies, where they were received with the most lively enthusiasm. The Allied generals, meanwhile, inspired with undue confidence by the long-continued retreat of the French troops, and ignorant of the arrival of the Emperor at Chalons, were in a very unprepared state to receive an encounter. Blücher, with characteristic impatience and recklessness to consequences, had formed his army into three divisions; he himself with twenty-six thousand men having advanced to Brienne, where headquarters were established; while York, with twenty thousand Prussians, was at St Michel on the Meuse, and Sacken was at Lesmont, fifteen miles distant. Thus Napoleon, by his advance to St Dizier, had cut the army of Silesia in two, and he had it in his power either to fall on one of these detached corps with an overwhelming force, or to de file towards Chaumont and Langres, to repel Schwartzberg and the grand army. He resolved to adopt the former plan, justly deeming Blücher the most resolute as well as formidable of his opponents; the one, therefore, whom it was both most probable he might take at a disadvantage, and most important that he should disable by an early disaster.¹ He continued, therefore, his march against the Prussian general without

16.
Napoleon
assumes the
offensive, and
marches
against
Blücher.

Jan. 26.

¹ Jom. iv.
526. Fain,
70, 71.
Dan. 51, 52.
Vand. i. 186,
187. Plotho,
iii. 104, 107.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
215, 219.

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interruption, plunged without hesitation into the forest of Der, which could only be crossed in that direction by deep country roads: on the 28th he reached Montierender, and on the day following, by daybreak, the army was advancing in great spirits against Blucher, who lay within half a day's march, at Brienne, wholly unconscious of the approaching danger.

17.
Preparatory
movements
on both sides.

Had Napoleon reached the Prussian general before he had received any intimation of his approach, it is certain that a great disaster would have befallen him; for he had only under his immediate command two divisions of Olsooff's corps, that of Sacken being at Lesmont, at a considerable distance. About noon, however, an officer was brought in prisoner with despatches, which proved to be of the highest importance, as they contained an order from Napoleon to Mortier to draw near and co-operate in a general attack on Blucher at Brienne. This at once revealed the presence of the Emperor, and the imminence of the danger. The Prussian general instantly sent off orders to Sacken to advance to his support with all possible expedition; and prepared himself to retire towards the Aube if he was attacked by superior forces, as his whole cavalry was already across that river, and the open plains of Champagne exposed the infantry to great risk should they combat without that arm. At this critical moment, when he was every instant expecting to be attacked, Count Pahlen's cavalry of Wittgenstein's corps, belonging to the grand army, appeared in rear, and, on Blucher's request, immediately marched forward to the front of Brienne. Forming on the road by which the enemy was expected, this body of horse covered Sacken's movement from Lesmont. Intelligence of Napoleon's advance at the same time reached Schwartzenberg at Chaumont; and Alexander, who had arrived there that very day from Langres, immediately gave instructions to Barclay, with the Russian guards and reserves, to come up with all possible expedition from the rear. At the same time he sent out orders in all directions for the concentration of the grand army. But, before the orders could be received, the blow had been delivered, and Blucher had been exposed to a rude encounter in the chateau of Brienne.¹

1 Jom. iv.
526, 527.
Dan. 51, 52.
Fain, 70, 71.
Vaud. i. 184,
185. Plotho,
iii. 108, 109.

The French troops encountered the most serious obstacles, and underwent dreadful fatigue all the 28th, in forcing their way through the deep and miry alleys of the forest of Der. The frost, which it was expected would have removed every difficulty, had given way, and the thaw which succeeded had rendered the execrable cross-roads all but impassable. It was only by the greatest efforts that the guns and artillery waggons could be dragged through; but by the zeal and ardour of the peasants of the forest, who harnessed themselves to the guns, and toiled night and day without intermission, the difficulties were at length overcome, and on the morning of the 29th, the troops were extricated from the wood, and on their march across the open country to Brienne. The curate of Maizières acted as their guide; he had escaped from the hussars of the Prussians, and threw himself before Napoleon, who recognised in him an old college companion at Brienne, whom he had not seen since they studied together, equal in rank and prospects, twenty-five years before! Soon the troops approached the town, and discovered the Prussians drawn up in successive lines in front of its buildings, and strongly occupying with their artillery the beautiful terraces which lie along its higher parts.¹

Brienne stands on a hill sloping upwards to the castle, which stands on an eminence adjoining its summit; and its streets, after the manner of those in Genoa and Naples, rise in successive tiers above each other to the highest point. Olsoofief's guns, with Pahlen's dragoons, occupied, as an advanced guard, the great road between it and Maizières; and it was absolutely necessary at all hazards to keep possession of that line, as it commanded the only access by which Sacken could effect his junction with the commander-in-chief. This duty was most gallantly performed by these brave officers, and the ground allotted to them strenuously maintained, from two in the afternoon, when the action commenced, till the whole of Sacken's corps had defiled through the streets, and effected its junction with the infantry of Olsoofief in rear, when they gradually retired towards the lower part of the town.²

Encouraged by the retreat of the enemy's rearguard, Napoleon now pressed vigorously on with all the forces

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18.

Napoleon
drives the
Russians into
Brienne.
Jan. 29.

1 Fain, 72,
73. Vaud. i.
185. Jom.
iv. 526. Die
GrosseChron.
ii. 221, 224.

19.

Description
of Brienne
and of the
Allied posi-
tion.

2 Dan. 54,
55. Fain,
72, 73.
Vaud. i. 185,
187. Jom.
iv. 526, 527.
Personal
observation.

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20.
Successful
attack on the
town and
castle of
Brienne.
Jan. 29.

he could command; and from the successive arrival of fresh troops, while the action was going on in front of the town, they were very considerable. His numerous guns were hurried forward to the front, and, opening a concentric fire on the town, discharged a shower of bombs and shells which speedily set it on fire, and reduced to ashes a considerable part of its buildings, including the college where Napoleon had been educated—where he had passed the happy and as yet unambitious days of childhood, and where he had learned the art of war, which he now let loose with such devastating fury on the scenes of his infancy. A column of infantry, through the flaming tempest, burst into the town, and charging, amidst the spreading conflagration, through the streets, took twelve Russian guns. A battery, however, which Sacken established, commanding the French left, checked the advance of the troops destined to support this vigorous onset; and Pahlen and Wassilchikoff's dragoons charging the assailants in flank, they not only lost the guns they had taken, but were driven out of the town with the loss of eight pieces of their own. The fire continued with great vigour on both sides till nightfall, but the town remained in the hands of the Russians; gradually it slackened as darkness overspread the horizon; and Blucher, deeming the battle over, retired to the chateau to rest a few hours after his fatigues, and survey from its elevated summit the position of the vast semicircle of watch-fires, which marked the position of the enemy to the west of the town.¹

¹ Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
214, 217.
Dan. 54,
55. Vaud. i.
188, 189.
Fain, 72.
Beauchamps,
i. 185, 186.
Plötho, iii.
104, 105.

21.
Imminent
danger of
Blucher on
this occasion.

He was still on the top of the building, when loud cries were heard in the avenues which led to it, immediately succeeded by the discharge of musketry, and vehement shouts at the foot of the castle itself. The old marshal had barely time to hasten down stairs, accompanied by a few of his suite, when it was carried by a body of French grenadiers, who, during the darkness, had stolen unperceived into the grounds of the chateau. In his way to the town, he was told by a Cossack, who came riding up at full speed with the account, that the French had again burst into Brienne; and, by the light of the burning houses, he distinctly perceived a large body of the enemy coming rapidly towards him at full

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trot. Even in this extremity, however, the marshal would only consent to turn aside into a cross lane, where he was leisurely proceeding off at a walk, when Gneisenau, seeing that the enemy were rapidly gaining upon him, said, "Can it be your wish to be carried in triumph to Paris?" Blucher upon this put spurs to his horse, and with difficulty regained his troops. About the same time, several French squadrons charged with loud hurrahs along the street, where Sacken was issuing orders. There was neither time nor avenue to escape, and with great presence of mind he backed his horse into the shadow of a house in the street, which was the darker from the glare of the flames behind it, while the furious whirlwind drove past: the dragoons in their haste taking no thought of, nor even observing, him who two months afterwards was governor of Paris! Blucher upon this ordered the town to be cleared of the enemy, which was immediately done; but though Olsoofief advanced to the attack of the castle, he was always repulsed with loss: the assailants, from the light of the burning houses, being distinctly seen, while the defenders were shrouded in darkness. At two in the morning the Prussian field-marshal drew off his whole force to the strong position of Trannes, on the road to Bar-sur-Aube, where the grand army was; and the smoking and half-burnt ruins of Brienne remained entirely in the possession of the French.¹

In this bloody affair the Russians only were engaged: both parties fought with the most determined resolution, and each sustained a loss of about three thousand men—a great proportion, considering the numbers who combated on either side. It is a remarkable circumstance, characteristic of the desperate chances of the death-struggle which was commencing, that at the very time when Blucher and Sacken so narrowly escaped being made prisoners, Napoleon himself was still nearer destruction; and a Cossack's lance had all but terminated the life which still kept a million of armed men at bay. The bulk of the French army was bivouacking in the plain between Maizières and Brienne; and the Emperor, after having inspected their positions, was riding back, accompanied by his suite, to the former town, in earnest con-

¹ Fain, 73,
74. Dan. 55,
56. Jom. iv.
526, 527.
Vaud. i. 189,
191. Lab. ii.
156, 157. Die
GrosseChron.
ii. 224, 227.
Volderndorf
iv. 8.

22.
Results of
the battle,
and immin-
ent danger
of Napoleon.

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Jan. 30.

¹ Fain, 74,
76.

23.
Concentra-
tion of the
Grand Army.
Jan. 31.

versation with General Gourgaud, when General Dejean, who commanded the patrol in front, suddenly turned, and cried aloud, "The Cossacks!" Hardly were the words spoken, when a party of these enterprising marauders dashed across the road: Dejean seized the foremost, and strove to plunge his sabre in his throat. The Cossack, however, disengaged himself, parried the blow, and continuing his career, made with his lance in rest at the horseman with the cocked hat and grey riding-coat who rode in front. A cry of horror arose in the Emperor's suite: Corbineau threw himself across the lancer's path, while Gourgaud drew his pistol and shot him dead, so near Napoleon that he fell at his feet! The suite now rapidly came up, and the Cossacks, ignorant of the inestimable prize almost within their grasp, and seeing the first surprise had failed, dispersed and fled. On the day following, the Emperor perceiving that the enemy had entirely evacuated Brienne, transferred his headquarters to its castle. The sight of the scenes of his youth, and of the sports of his boyhood, recalled a thousand emotions, to which he had long been a stranger; the past, the present, and the future, flitted in dark array before him; and he strove to allay the melancholy of his reflections by magnificent projects for the future restoration of Brienne, and the establishment of a palace or a military school, or both, in the much-loved cradle of his eventful career.¹

Meanwhile the Allied generals, now thoroughly alarmed, made the most vigorous efforts to concentrate their forces. Early on the morning of the 30th, the whole grand army marched to Trannes, with the exception of Wittgenstein and Wrede's corps, which were ordered to Passy and St Dizier to cover the right, and open up a communication with York's corps, which was approaching from that direction. At the same time, Blucher's troops were drawn together from all quarters; and the Allies, having now concentrated an overwhelming force in the two armies, resolved to give battle. Above a hundred thousand men were assembled under the immediate command of the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia, exclusive of Colloredo's men, twenty-five thousand more, who were at Vandœuvres during the action; and

Wittgenstein's detached corps. The 31st passed over without any offensive movement on either side, while the Allied troops were rapidly coming into line—an inactivity on the part of Napoleon so inexplicable, considering that he was inferior in force, upon the whole, to his antagonists, and therefore was certain to lose by giving them time to concentrate, that Alexander, more than once, was led to doubt whether he was really with the opposite armies.¹

Meantime the Allies, in admirable order, took up their ground; and their generals, from the heights of Trannes, which overlooked the whole adjacent country, anxiously surveyed the theatre of the approaching battle. The centre, consisting chiefly of the Russians under Blucher's command, was posted on the elevated ridge of Trannes, with Barclay de Tolly's reserve behind it; the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg's corps composed the right wing, which stood at Getanie; Giulay's Austrians formed the left, with Colloredo in reserve. With great delicacy, Schwartzberg intrusted the general command of the whole to Blucher, who had commenced the conflict with such spirit on the preceding day. Upon this, Napoleon, finding himself overmatched, and that the Allied army, instead of being surprised in detail, was perfectly prepared and hourly increasing in strength, made dispositions for a retreat. But previous to this it was necessary to restore the bridge of Lesmont, the only issue by which his columns could recross the Aube. The French line was drawn up directly opposite to that of the Allies, and extended from Dionville on the right, through LA ROTHIERE and La Gibérie in the centre, to Chauménil on the extreme left; forming the two sides of a right-angled triangle, facing outwards, of which La Gibérie was the turning point.²

Perceiving that, contrary to his previous custom, Napoleon remained motionless awaiting an attack—a striking indication of the altered state of his fortunes—Schwartzberg gave orders to Blucher to commence the battle, and it took place on the 1st of February. The weather was dark and gloomy: a cold wind, swelling at intervals into fitful gusts, driving heavy snow showers before it, obscured every thing till one o'clock in the after-

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¹ Fain, 76.
77. Burgh.
110, 111.
Vaud. i. 196.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
228, 230.

24.
And of the
army of
Silesia.

² Dan. 62,
63. Vaud. i.
196, 197.
Fain, 76, 77.
Burgh. iii.
112. Plotho
iii. 116, 117.

25.
Order of
battle on
either side.

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noon, when the sky cleared, and the receding mist discovered the French army, about fifty thousand strong, drawn up in order of battle. Gerard commanded the right, Marmont the left, and Napoleon himself directed the centre, having Mortier, Ney, and Oudinot in reserve, immediately behind it. To distinguish the Allied troops, who belonged to six different sovereigns and were in every variety of uniform, from the enemy, orders were given that they should all, from the general to the private soldier, wear a white band on the left arm. The adoption of this badge made General Jomini suggest to Alexander, that it might give rise to surmises as to the intentions of the Allied sovereigns regarding the Bourbons. "What have I to do with them?" replied the Czar: a striking proof how much even those who are intrusted with the supreme direction of affairs, are themselves impelled in the most important events by a power of which they are the unconscious and unforeseeing instruments.¹

¹ Dan. 64,
65. Vaud. i.
196, 197.
Burgh. 112,
113. Kaus-
ler, 476. Die
Grosse Chron.
ii. 223, 225.

26.
Battle of
La Rothière.
Feb. 1.

The monarchs now gave the orders to attack; and Prince Schwartzemberg having sent a confidential officer to inquire of Blucher what plan of attack he would recommend, instead of specifying movements, he replied—"We must march to Paris; Napoleon has been in all the capitals of Europe: we must make him descend from a throne which it would have been well for us all that he had never mounted. We shall have no repose till we pull him down." Meanwhile Giulay advanced on Dionville, the Prince of Würtemberg on La Gibérie, Sacken on La Rothière, Wrede on Morvilliers. So heavy was the ground, that Niketin, who commanded Sacken's artillery, was obliged to leave half his guns in position on the ridge of Trannes, and harness the horses belonging to them to the other half, thirty-six in number, with which he advanced to the attack. Ten fresh horses were in this way got for each of the heavy guns, six to the light, and five to the caissons; and with this additional strength the cannon were dragged through the deep clay, and formed in line under a heavy discharge from the French artillery. The infantry destined for their protection being still far in the rear toiling through the miry fields, Napoleon caused a large body of horse to charge the guns; but the Russian

cannoniers, with admirable coolness, placed the charges under cover of their cloaks close beside the pieces, to save time in carrying them; and having done so, withheld their fire till the horse were within six hundred yards, when they opened so tremendous a discharge, that the assailants were quickly obliged to retreat. Snow then fell with such thickness, that the nearest objects were hardly visible; the additional men and horses were sent back for the thirty-six pieces left behind at Trannes, which were brought to the front before the darkness cleared away.¹

While this was going on in front, the infantry and cavalry of Sacken's corps approached, and the action commenced at all points. The Prince of Würtemberg drove the enemy from a wood which they occupied in front of La Gibérie, and, threading his devious way through a narrow path between fishponds, at last reached the open country, and immediately commenced an attack on the villages of La Gibérie and Chauménil, which were carried after a bloody struggle. Napoleon upon this directed a portion of his guards and reserves to regain these important posts, which formed, as it were, the salient angle of his position, and supported their attack by the concentric fire of a large part of his artillery. The efforts of these brave men proved successful, and the villages were regained; but the Prince returned to the charge in front, supported by Wrede, who assailed them in flank, and by their united efforts the village of La Gibérie was again won and permanently held by the Allies. Meanwhile Sacken in the centre led his troops in beautiful array against La Rothière and the French batteries adjacent. So steady was their advance, that the infantry were in many places headed by their regimental bands. Count Lieven, with the vanguard, pushed the attack with such vigour, that he reached the church of La Rothière, around which a bloody conflict arose, although the snow fell so thick, that the combatants were frequently obliged to suspend their fire, from being unable to see each other. At this critical moment the Russian dragoons, under Lanskoj and Pantchenlidzeff, advanced, broke the French cavalry, and, following up their success, charged and captured a battery of twenty-eight guns in the enemy's centre.

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¹ Dan. 66,
67. Burgh.
112, 113.
Vaud. i. 248,
250. Beauch.
i. 196, 197.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
241, 242.

27.

Great success
of the Rus-
sians on the
right centre.

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¹ Dan. 67,
68. Lab. ii.
161, 162.
Koch, i. 250,
252. Burgh.
114, 118.
Plotho, iii.
120, 121.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
243, 245, 247.

28.

Napoleon's
last attack,
and final
defeat.

² Dan. 68,
69. Lab. ii.
162, 164.
Vaud. i. 252,
253. Koch,
i. 183, 186.
Burgh. 117,
118. Plotho,
iii. 121, 122.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
246, 247.

At the same time the Prince of Würtemberg. made himself master of a battery of nine guns between La Gibérie and La Rothière, turned sharp to his left, attacked the latter village in flank, and expelled the French from every part of it, while Wrede carried Chauménil and Morvilliers, with twelve guns on the extreme left of the line. Thus the French centre and left were entirely broken through and beaten; and although their right still stood firm at Dionville, and had repulsed all the attacks of Giulay's Austrians, yet the battle before six o'clock seemed to be clearly decided in favour of the Allies.¹

Napoleon, however, had been too long a victorious general to despair as yet of the contest. Oudinot came up opportunely from the neighbourhood of Lesmont with two fresh divisions; and the Emperor, putting himself at the head of the dragoons of Colbert and Piri, and bringing up every disposable gun he had left, directed a general attack on La Rothière. Perceiving the concentration of the French forces on this decisive point, Blucher, too, put himself at the head of his reserves, and advanced to sustain the encounter. It was late when these two redoubtable antagonists met in arms; the shades of night already overspread the field, which was only partially illuminated by the feeble rays of the moon. The first attack of the French was irresistible; the village was carried amid loud cheers: but the Emperor of Russia immediately brought up the grenadier regiments of Little Russia and Astrachan, which again drove the enemy out at the point of the bayonet, the whole grenadier corps and cuirassiers of the guard being brought up to support the assault. In the struggle which ensued, the division Duhesme was almost entirely destroyed. Both parties fought with the utmost resolution. Napoleon and Blucher in person directed the attacks; but at length the French were overpowered and driven out of the greater part of the village; while at the same time Giulay, on the extreme right of the French, at midnight, after a sixth assault carried Dionville. The whole villages and ground held by the French in the commencement of the battle were now in the hands of the Allies; and Napoleon, seeing the day irrecoverably lost,² gave orders to burn the portion he still held

of La Rothière, and drew off his shattered troops to Brienne, under cover of the thick darkness of a winter's night.

The cause of Napoleon appeared now altogether desperate. He had suddenly collected his troops and made a fierce irruption into the heart of the enemies' armies; but instead of striking any of his former terrible blows, he had met every where with the most obstinate resistance: his onset had served as the signal for the concentration of their vast armies, and he had finally been defeated in a pitched battle on the ground which he himself had chosen. In the last action he had lost six thousand men, including a thousand prisoners, and seventy-three pieces of cannon, wrested from him in fair fight; while the Allies were only weakened by two-thirds of that number. The *prestige* of a first victory was lost by him, and gained by his opponents. Nine thousand of his best soldiers had fallen, or been made prisoners, since hostilities had recommenced; discouragement, almost despair, was general in his ranks, and it was difficult to see how the future advance of a host of enemies was to be arrested, when less than a half of their armies had defeated so well-conceived and daring an enterprise by his whole disposable force. Nor did subsequent events weaken the force of this impression: on the contrary, they strongly confirmed it, and seemed to presage the immediate dissolution of the French power. Napoleon returned at midnight to Brienne; and such was his anxiety lest the enemy should take advantage of the confusion of his retiring columns to make a nocturnal attack, and complete his ruin, that, not content with incessantly asking if there was any thing new, he himself stood for some hours at the windows of the chateau of Brienne, which overlooked the field, anxiously watching to see if any unusual movement around the bivouac fires indicated the commencement of an irruption. Nothing, however, prognosticated such an event; the flames were steady, and gradually declined as night advanced; and at four on the following morning, the Emperor, satisfied he was not pursued, gave orders for a retreat by Lesmont to Troyes.¹

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29.
Results of
the battle,
and desperate
condition of
Napoleon.

¹ Plotho, iii.
126. Die
Grosse Chron.
ii. 251, 252.
Fain. 78,
79. Joni. iv.
527, 528.
Dan. 70, 71.

This first and most important victory gained on the

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30.

Great exulta-
tion in the
Allied army
at this suc-
cess.

soil of France over the arms of Napoleon, produced the most unbounded transports in the Allied armies. During the progress of the action, Alexander and Frederick William were spectators from the heights of Trannes of the success of their arms, and testified the most lively sense of their gratitude to the victorious generals and chiefs by whom it had been effected. "Tell the field-marshal," said the former to Blucher's aide-de-camp, "that he has crowned all his former victories by this glorious triumph." The day after the battle, the sovereigns, ambassadors, and principal generals, supped together in the chateau of Brienne; and Blucher, striking off, in his eagerness, the necks of the bottles of champagne with his knife, quaffed off copious and repeated libations to the toast, drunk with enthusiasm by all present, "Nach Paris!" (to Paris.) Yet, although such were the anticipations which universally prevailed, and not without reason, of an immediate march to the French capital, it may be doubted whether Blucher made as much of his superiority of force as he might have done; and whether Napoleon in his place would not have made the success at La Rothière far more decisive than it was. Certainly, if the position of the French army,—forming the two sides of a right-angled triangle facing outwards, with the Aube, traversed only by a single bridge at Lesmont, in its rear,—and that of the Allies, pressing them with superior forces on both sides up against the impassable river, be taken into consideration, it might have been expected that more decisive results would have been obtained. In fact such would have been secured, if, instead of directing the weight of his attacks against La Rothière and La Gîbérie in front, the Prussian marshal had more strongly supported the assault, which in the end proved decisive, of Wrede on Chauménil and Morvilliers in flank.¹

¹ Koch, i.
186, 187.
Dan. 73, 74.
Personal
knowledge.

31.

Desperate
condition of
the French
army in their
retreat.

In truth, however, such was the discouragement and disaster which resulted to the French army from this calamitous action, that it brought Napoleon to the very brink of ruin. On the day after the battle, the army defiled in great confusion over the bridge of Lesmont; and Marmont, who was left with twelve thousand men to cover the retreat, soon found himself beset, as Victor

had been by the Russians at the Beresina, by Wrede's corps, above twenty thousand strong. It was only by the most vigorous exertions, seconded by the heroic devotion of his followers, that the brave marshal succeeded in repelling the repeated attacks of the Bavarians, urged on to the charge by the personal direction of the Emperor Alexander, who exposed himself in the thickest of the fight. In the afternoon a thick snow storm suspended the combat, and Marmont took advantage of it to withdraw his troops across the river. The Russians, disconcerted by this bloody encounter, gave no further molestation to their retreat. Nevertheless, it proved to the last degree disastrous to the French. On the day following, Napoleon with all his forces fell back to Troyes, the capital of Champagne, where Mortier with his corps was already established, erecting barricades, running up palisades, establishing batteries, breaking out loopholes in the houses of the suburbs, and making every preparation for a vigorous defence.¹

The situation of the town of Troyes, containing twenty-two thousand inhabitants, in the midst of an extensive plain at the confluence of the Barse and the Seine, was such as to render it little capable of standing a siege, while at the same time it afforded opportunities, on the right bank of the latter river, of keeping even a superior enemy several days at bay. Napoleon resolved to make use of it for this latter temporary purpose, to gain time for the further concentration of his troops; and in this endeavour he was much aided by the dilatory conduct of Schwartzemberg in continuing the pursuit. The Austrians, Bavarians, and Würtembergers, who, from the direction which the retiring French army had taken, found themselves foremost in following it, were so tardy in their movements, that they literally lost sight of the enemy; and for two days it was unknown at headquarters whether the main body of the French had retreated in the direction of Arcis, Chalons, or Troyes. Already the secret reluctance of the Austrian cabinet to push matters to extremity against Napoleon, which exercised so powerful an influence on the fortunes of the campaign, was becoming very apparent. Yet, notwithstanding this slackness in the pursuit, such was

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Feb. 2.

Feb. 3.

¹ Koch, i.
196, 197.

Dan. 73, 75.

Jom. iv. 528.

Vold. iv. 8,

82. Die

Grosse Chron.

ii. 261, 264.

32.

Dilatory
movements of
the Allies in
pursuit.

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¹ Koch, i.
197, 199.
Dan. 74, 75.
Fain, 81, 83.
Burgh. 119,
120.

the effect of a retrograde movement upon the spirits of the French soldiers, and such the impression produced on the minds of the young conscripts, by the hardships they had undergone since they took the field in that rigorous weather, that six thousand deserted their colours, and disappeared during the retreat to Troyes; and the army reached that town fifteen thousand weaker than when Napoleon, a week before, had given the signal of advance from Chalons.¹

33.
Imprudent
dislocation
of the Allied
armies.
Feb. 2.

The future plan of operations resolved on by the Allied sovereigns on the 2d February at the castle of Brienne, and which proved so disastrous in its consequences, as to have well-nigh rendered abortive all the vast efforts which had been made for the invasion of France, was, that the Grand Army and army of Silesia, instead of acting together, or in concert, when their mass was irresistible, *should separate*, and act on different lines of operation. Blucher with the army of Silesia, was to advance upon Chalons, and thence to follow the course of the Marne to Paris, through Chateau-Thierry and Meaux; while Prince Schwartzberg was to move on to Troyes, and descend the valley of the Seine by Montereau to the same capital. Want of provisions and of forage, which already began to be severely felt, if such an enormous multitude of men and horses was kept united, was the reason assigned for this most imprudent dislocation; as if any reason short of absolute necessity could justify the separation of the two armies to such a distance that they could not render aid to each other, in the presence of such a general as Napoleon, still at the head of seventy thousand men, in a central position between them. It would seem as if, forgetting that the concentration of the two armies the autumn before had wrought out the deliverance of Germany, and that their recent union had all but secured the conquest of France, they were determined to give every facility to a prolongation of the war, and to afford to the French Emperor an opportunity for dealing out, on the right and left, those redoubtable blows by which, fourteen years before, he had prostrated Wurmser and Alvinzi on the banks of the Adige.²

² Dan. 74,
75. Burgh.
120, 124.
Koch, i. 191.
Jom. iv. 533.

The disastrous consequences of this separation of force were speedily apparent. It was not that Schwartzemberg had not a sufficient force in his own army to crush Napoleon; but that, separated from Blucher and the army of Silesia, the daring resolution was wanting in all but Alexander, which could alone lead to decisive results. Austrian diplomacy, anxious to save the French Emperor from a total fall, now, as on so many former occasions, became predominant over military councils; and Napoleon, relieved from all disquietude on the side of the grand army of Austria, was able to turn his undivided attention to the strokes which he meditated against that of Silesia. No sooner, therefore, did he receive intelligence of the separation of the two armies, and that Blucher, in obedience to his instructions, was moving towards Chalons-sur-Marne, while Schwartzemberg's huge masses were slowly drawing around Troyes, than he resolved to descend the course of the Seine towards Paris, and thus facilitate his junction with the reinforcements of veteran troops which were approaching, drawn from the army of Soult. He did this in the hope that, when he had in this manner repaired his losses, he would be enabled to strike a blow with effect against the flank of the army of Silesia, when advancing towards the capital. With this view, he allowed his troops to repose during three days at Troyes; and so imposed upon the enemy by the good countenance which he maintained in front of that town, and by a vigorous sortie which he made beyond the Barse, that the Austrian general, instead of advancing, deemed it necessary to draw back his headquarters to Bar-sur-Aube, and throw two corps across the Seine, in order to make a general attack at once on both banks. Napoleon had no intention of risking a general engagement where he stood; and his troops having somewhat recovered from their fatigues, he broke up with his whole army early on the morning of the 6th, and reached Nogent on the road to Paris on the following evening. The headquarters of the Allied army were immediately advanced, and on the 7th were established in Troyes, which they took the most anxious precautions to preserve from pillage or disorder of any sort.¹

Though the retreat of the French army down the

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34.

Retreat of
the French
from Troyes,
and its occu-
pation by the
Allies.

Feb. 5.

Feb. 6.

¹ Fain, 84,
85. Dan. 77,
78. Burgh.
122, 123.
Koch, i. 201,
203.

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35.

Extreme
depression in
the French
army.

Seine to Nogent was a prudent measure, profoundly calculated, and which speedily led to the most brilliant results, yet it produced at first the most ruinous effects upon the army. The hopes of the soldiers were entirely dissipated by this long-continued retreat; it was seriously feared that Paris itself would ere long be abandoned: the cause of Napoleon, and of the Revolution, seemed at an end. They felt the same despair as the Russians had done in retiring from Smolensko towards Moscow. The troops marched in sullen and gloomy silence over the wet and dreary roads: the ominous question, "Where are we to stop?" was in every mouth. Nor were the spirits of the troops revived when they reached Nogent, and the army, receiving orders to halt, made preparations by mining the bridge, loopholing the houses, and barricading the streets, to dispute the passage of the Seine. Moreover, the most disquieting intelligence was received from all quarters: the defection of Murat was announced from Italy; Antwerp was blockaded by the Anglo-Prussian army; Liege and Aix-la-Chapelle were occupied; Brussels had been evacuated; Flanders was lost; General Maison was rapidly falling back to the old frontiers of the monarchy; while the unresisted march of Blucher to Chalons, which he had occupied on the 5th, clearly indicated a resolution to march on Paris by the route by which it was most assailable, and where scarcely any force existed to arrest his progress. The troops, profoundly affected at having so long to retire before the enemy, were now deserting by crowds; the sides of the road were covered with arms, cloaks, and haversacks, thrown down in despair; twelve thousand conscripts had left their standards since the battle of La Rothière, making the total loss since hostilities recommenced not less than twenty thousand: and the despatches from Caulaincourt, who was engaged in the conferences which had been opened at Chatillon, announced that the demands of the Allied sovereigns, rising with the successes of their arms, were no longer limited, as at Frankfort, to the recognition of the frontier of the Rhine, but pointed to the reduction of France within the ancient limits of the monarchy.¹

Such was the magnitude of the losses which the French army had sustained since the opening of the campaign,

¹ Fain, 84,
86. Dan. 76,
78. Koch, i.
202, 203.
Burgh. 123,
124. Lab. ii.
172.

especially in cavalry, that a fresh organisation of that arm, to conceal the frightful chasms in its ranks, had become necessary. It took place at Nogent, and continued unchanged till the conclusion of the war. The cavalry had previously been divided into six corps; but such had been the enormous amount of its losses, that, even with the aid of successive remounts, sent from the depots in the interior, it could only now make out four, of which two were composed of only three divisions each. Grouchy obtained the general command of the whole, and the corps under him were intrusted to Count Bordesoult, Count St Germain, Count Milhaud, and Kellerman, now created Count de Valmy. In addition to this, there was the cavalry of the guard, consisting of five divisions, under Laferrière, Lefebvre Desnouettes, Colbert, Guyot, and Defrance; and such was the activity displayed in pushing reinforcements into this service, that it soon numbered in its ranks fifteen thousand admirable horsemen. The skeleton of a new corps of infantry was also formed, under Oudinot, on the Seine below Nogent, and at Bray, composed of the divisions Leval and Boyer de Rebeval, which were now coming up from the army of the Pyrenees, and of various bodies of conscripts hurried forward from the depots in the interior.¹

It was in these disastrous and all but desperate circumstances, that Napoleon conceived and executed one of those hardy, yet prudent measures, which have justly rendered his name immortal. Rightly judging that he need not disquiet himself about the Austrians,—whose slow and methodical movements, ever kept subordinate to the mysteries of diplomacy, were now more than ever circumspect, from the peculiar position of their emperor making war on his own son-in-law,—he cast his eyes on Blucher, whose bolder movements, since the separation of the armies, were both more fitted to excite solicitude and afford opportunity. The progress of the Prussian marshal, since he had been left at liberty to act for himself, had been so rapid as to have excited the most lively apprehensions in the breasts of the Parisians. Hardly an hour elapsed that the most alarming intelligence was not received from the seat of government. The Russians and Prussians, with their ardent chief at their head, were

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36.
Fresh organi-
sation of the
French
cavalry.¹ Koch, i.
208. Vaud.
i. 294, 295.37.
Napoleon
resolves to
attack
Blucher on
his advance
to Paris.

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advancing by forced marches towards the capital, and driving before them a confused and trembling crowd of peasants, women, and children, who fled at the approach of these northern barbarians. In this extremity, with disaster pressing him on every side, and the enemy's advanced posts within a few marches of the capital, Maret and all his councillors earnestly besought the Emperor to accept even the rigorous conditions proposed by the Allies, and make peace. But after a night passed in reflection, he replied, "No, no ! we must think of other things just now. I am on the eve of destroying Blucher. He is advancing on the road to Montmirail. I am about to set off. I shall beat him to-morrow—I shall beat him the day after to-morrow : if that movement is attended with the success it deserves, the face of affairs will be entirely changed, and then we shall see what is to be done." ¹

¹ Fain, 90.
91. Dan. 96.
Lib. ii. 181,
182.

38.
Movements
of Blucher in
Champagne.
Feb. 3.

The positions occupied by the army of Silesia, in all fifty-six thousand strong, at this juncture, were singularly favourable to such an enterprise. Blucher, with the corps of Sacken and Olsoofief, which had fought at La Rothière, had, in obedience to the instructions he had received, moved on the 3d through St Ouen on the road to Chalons. Meanwhile York attacked that town, which was garrisoned by a detachment of Macdonald's corps, and after a sharp conflict made himself master of it. That brave marshal, who was encumbered with the grand park of Napoleon's army, consisting of a hundred guns dragged by peasants' horses, upon this retired to Epernay, towards Paris ; and Blucher no sooner heard of the direction of his march, than he resolved to cut him off, and for this purpose directed his troops to La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where the two great roads from Chalons to Paris meet. The better to compass this design, which seemed to promise entire success, he ordered York to follow the French marshal by the highway through Chateau-Thierry and Epernay ; Sacken was directed through Bergères on MONTMIRAIL ; and he was to be followed at the distance of a day's march by Olsoofief, who was commanded to remain at CHAMPAUBERT till further orders. The field-marshal himself halted at Vertus, almost without troops, to await the coming up of Kleist's corps, which was hourly

Feb. 4.

Feb. 5.

Feb. 6.

expected at Chalons. With the three corps united, he proposed to fall on Macdonald's troops, and having destroyed them and taken the convoy of guns, push direct on the capital, where the utmost consternation already prevailed. Sacken's advanced guard had reached La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and the crowd of fugitives was pouring in wild disorder into Meaux; already the litters of the wounded, and the disbanded conscripts, were beginning to be seen in Paris, where the public streets were almost deserted in the apprehension of an impending calamity. No uneasiness filled the field-marshal's breast, during this rapid advance, for the security of his left flank, though Napoleon lay in that direction, as he deemed him sufficiently occupied with watching the motions of the grand army; as Nogent, where the headquarters of the French were established, was thirty miles distant; and as the only approach to it was through deep cross-roads, by the marshy bank of the Petit Morin, apparently impassable at that inclement season of the year.¹

Having taken his resolution, the Emperor instantly gave orders for carrying it into execution; and leaving Victor at Nogent with fourteen thousand men, to keep the Austrians in check, and Oudinot at Bray-sur-Seine at the head of ten thousand, with orders to delay them as long as possible at the passage of that river, he resolved himself to set out with the *élite* of his army, about forty-five thousand strong, for Sezanne, with the intention of falling perpendicularly on the line of Blucher's march, and destroying his scattered columns. On the 9th he broke up with this design from Nogent, and slept at Sezanne, half-way across, with the imperial guard, and on the following day moved on towards Champaubert. But the obstacles to the passage proved greater even than had been anticipated, and it required all the vigour and authority of the Emperor to overcome the insubordination of his troops, and conquer the difficulties of the enterprise. The spirits of the soldiers, already severely depressed when they arrived at Nogent, were sunk to the lowest degree by the hardships and difficulties of this cross march, for which no object was apparent,² and which seemed to have been undertaken for no other purpose but to lay open to the Austrian

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¹ Dan. 95,
97. Lab. ii.
180, 182.
Fain, 90, 91.
Vaud. i. 280,
283, 292, 293.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
380, 382.
Clausewitz,
vii. 419.

39.
Extraordi-
nary difficul-
ties of the
passage
across the
country.

Feb. 9.

² Koch, i.
208. Dan.
95, 96.
Fain, ii. 92,
93. Vaud. i.
294, 298.
Platho, iii.
165. Die
Grosse Chron.
ii. 389, 391.

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grand army the undefended road to the capital. Murmurs were universal; insubordination bordered on mutiny; it was openly said, both by officers and men, that the Emperor had lost his head, and that he was fast hurrying the empire to destruction.

40.
Which are at
length over-
come.

Feb. 9.

Marmont, who led the advance with his corps, found the roads so dreadful, that the artillery drivers reported it impossible to get the guns through. In effect, notwithstanding all the efforts of the officers, the cannon and waggons stuck fast in the deep clay forest of Traçonne, and Marmont, despairing of success, was re-measuring his steps. When this was reported to the Emperor, he replied, "You must still advance, even if you leave the whole cannon behind you." The marshal was instantly ordered to face about and resume his march, and push through at all hazards. Couriers were despatched in all directions to the mayors of the adjacent communes to procure horses, to aid in extricating the artillery; and such was the patriotic ardour with which the assistance was furnished, that the guns and caissons were at length got through. The disorders and discouragement of the troops, however, had now reached their acme from this accumulation of difficulties; pillage became universal, and being exercised without mercy on the people of the country, gave rise to the most violent exasperation. The Emperor, after long shutting his eyes to these excesses, had at length his attention forcibly drawn to them by the destruction of a chateau, in the neighbourhood of Nogent, belonging to his own mother. Justly incensed, he issued a severe proclamation, in which he declared he would hold the generals and officers responsible for the conduct of their troops;* but the evil still continued with very little abatement, and, by preventing any cordial assistance from the peasantry to the soldiers, was one cause of the fall of Napoleon. It arose from a deeper source than any regulation of discipline could rectify—the habits of systematic extor-

¹ Dan. 95,
97. Koch, i.
208, 209.
Fain, 92, 93.
Vaud. i. 294,
303. Valent.
ii. 144.
Plottho, iii.
179.

* "The Emperor has to express to the army his displeasure at the excesses to which it abandons itself. Such disorders are always hurtful: but they become criminal when committed in our native country. From this day forward, the chiefs of corps and the generals shall be held entirely responsible for them. The inhabitants are flying on every side, and the troops, instead of being their country's defenders, are becoming its scourge."—*Proclamation, 8th Feb. 1814; DANILEFSKY, 95.*

tion to which the armies of the Revolution had been trained; and was, in fact, the reaction of Napoleon's favourite maxim, that war should maintain war, upon himself and his own subjects.

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Early on the morning of the 10th, Marmont passed the defiles of St Gond under the eyes of the Emperor, and immediately directed his march against the village of Baye, which was occupied by a detachment of Olsooff's corps. That general, with his gallant Russians, was lying at Champaubert in perfect security, and dreaming of nothing less than being assailed on his left flank, in which direction, from the position of Schwartzberg's army, and the difficult nature of the intervening country, there seemed no ground for apprehending danger. Meanwhile Marmont reached the summit of the height which overlooks the valley of the Petit Morin, and beheld the Russians, about five thousand strong, with twenty-four guns, busy in preparing their breakfasts, wholly unconscious of their approaching peril. Napoleon immediately rode up to the front, and, overjoyed at the success of his movement, ordered a general attack. The Russian general, though astonished beyond measure at this unexpected apparition on his flank, drew up his men with great steadiness to resist. Some prisoners, however, taken in the skirmish near Baye, having mentioned that the Emperor was with the troops, he despatched repeated couriers to Blucher to demand assistance, and know whether he should retreat. But the field-marshal directed him to maintain himself where he was, and that succour was unnecessary, as it was impossible that he could be assailed by more than a flying detachment of two thousand men. Thus left to his own resources, the brave Russian, though well aware he had to deal with an overwhelming force, led on by the Emperor himself, prepared, like a good soldier, to maintain his post to the last extremity.¹

41.
Combat of
Champ-
aubert.

Dan. 100,
102. Koch,
i. 234, 235.
Vaud. i. 304,
305. Fain,
93. Plotho,
iii. 176, 177.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii. 391.
392.

Napoleon, seeing that the enemy stood firm, made dispositions for attacking them at once in front and both flanks. Lagrange with his division, followed by that of Ricard, crossed the marshes of St Gond, carried the bridge of St Prix, and drove the Russian advanced posts into Champaubert, where they rallied, under protection of their main body and artillery, which opened a most

42.
Total defeat
of the Rus-
sian division.

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vigorous fire. Meanwhile, the French cavalry at a greater distance passed the marsh, and having gained the high-road leading from Champaubert to Montmirail, turned and attacked the Russians on their right flank, while Lagrange's division menaced their left. Despairing of maintaining his position against such an accumulation of enemies, Olsoofief sent half his guns to the rear, and, forming his men in column, marched in person to force the passage towards Etoges and Montmirail, while Poltoratsky, with a brigade, was left to defend Champaubert to the last extremity. This little band defended itself with desperate resolution till its ammunition began to fail, when they were obliged to retreat out of the village and retire across a plain, with the view of reaching the shelter of a wood at a little distance. As he drew near to this cover, Poltoratsky perceived that it was already in the hands of the enemy; and he was received by them with a volley of musketry. At the same time, the horse artillery of the French made fearful chasms in the Russian ranks; their cavalry charged in at the openings; and the wearied square dragged its toilsome way along, moistening every step with its blood. At length, having exhausted its last cartridge, the whole of this devoted band was overpowered and made prisoners. Olsoofief himself, finding the road to Etoges occupied by the French with superior forces, struck off to the left, and endeavoured to make his way across the fields towards Montmirail; but his guns stuck fast in the deep mud, so that the enemy had time to surround the detachment, which, having wholly exhausted its ammunition, was in great part made prisoners, with the commander himself. General Corneloff, however, with General Udom, disdained even in this extremity to surrender; but collecting the remains of the corps, about two thousand strong, with twelve guns, they succeeded in breaking through the enemy, and at midnight reached Portabinson with their colours and honour unsullied.¹

¹ Dan. 102,
104. Lab. ii.
187, 189.
Fain, 93.
Koch, i. 235,
239. Plotho,
iii. 176. Die
Grosse Chron.
ii. 392, 394.

In this disastrous affair the Russians lost three thousand men, killed, wounded, and prisoners, besides twelve guns and seventeen caissons, while the French were only weakened by six hundred men. The moral effect of the triumph was still more considerable; and it was

such that it well-nigh neutralised the whole effect of the previous successes, and rendered problematical the final result of the invasion. The French troops, who had been reduced to the lowest point of depression by the long-continued retreat, were elevated beyond measure by this brilliant success, which, achieved with so little loss, seemed to recall, in the midst of disaster, the brilliant days of Arcola and Rivoli. By this daring and felicitous cross march, the initiative had been regained by the French Emperor; he had achieved the greatest feat in strategy—that, with a force inferior upon the whole to his adversaries, of being greatly superior at the point of attack; he had broken in upon the line of advance of the army of Silesia, and could at pleasure turn with a concentrated array upon any of its scattered columns. The French soldiers, intelligent beyond any other in Europe, immediately perceived the immense advantages which this brilliant cross march had secured for them; the depression of the retreat, the disaster of La Rothière, the fatigues of the preceding days, were forgotten. Napoleon no longer appeared the insane ruler, hurrying blindfold to destruction, but the consummate commander, who prepared amidst adversity the means of regaining prosperous fortune; and that general confidence was felt, which, more than either numbers or experience, frequently contributes to military success.¹

Napoleon felt the whole impulse of the returning tide of victory, which had now set in to his arms. Poltoratsky, the Russian general, who had been made prisoner, having been brought before him, he exclaimed, "I now tell you, that as I have routed you to-day, I will annihilate Sacken to-morrow; on Thursday, the whole of Wittgenstein's advanced guard will be disposed of; on Friday, I will give Blücher a blow from which he will never recover, and I then hope to dictate peace to Alexander on the Vistula. Your old fox Kutusoff deceived me by his march on our flank: the burning of Moscow was a barbarous act—it was the work of the Russians. I took Berlin, Madrid, and Vienna, and no such thing happened."—"The Russians," replied Poltoratsky, "don't repent of that sacrifice, and are delighted with its results."—"Leave the room, sir!" replied the Emperor, stamping

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43.
Great effects
of this vic-
tory, and
measures of
Napoleon to
follow it up.

¹ Lab. ii. 189.
Fain, 93.
Koch, i. 239,
240. Claus.
vii. 423.
Plötho, iii.
176, 177.

44.
Napoleon's
subsequent
movements.

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Feb. 11.

¹ Dan. 106,
108. Lab. ii.
189, 190.
Koch, i. 239.
Plotho, iii.
178, 179.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
395, 396.

with his foot. On that very night he despatched orders to his plenipotentiary Caulaincourt, at the congress which was sitting, to gain time and *sign nothing*, as he was on the eve of the most important events. Next morning he announced his success to Macdonald, with orders to him to discontinue his retreat; and himself set off by day-break to attack Sacken at Montmirail, leaving the corps of Marmont before Etoges to watch Blücher, who lay at Vertus anxiously awaiting the arrival of Kleist's corps to enable him to resume the offensive. By this blow, Napoleon had cut the Silesian army into two parts, and interposed with fifty thousand men, to which his own army was now augmented, between its severed wings.¹

45.
Perilous situ-
ation of
Sacken.

Sacken's situation was now very critical. He had received an order from Blücher, late the night before, to remeasure his steps through Montmirail toward the plains of Vertus; and the field-marshal had ordered York to join him. But the rapidity of the Emperor's movements anticipated the execution of either of these orders. At the very time that Napoleon moved from Champaubert to Montmirail, Sacken was on his way to it, marching back from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, which he had reached on his advance toward Paris; but the French were beforehand, and Montmirail was occupied by their advanced guard before the Russians approached it. Thus anticipated, and intercepted in his attempted movement to rejoin his commander-in-chief, the Russian general had no alternative but to prepare for combat. This he did the more willingly, as he relied on the approach and co-operation of York, who was near Chateau-Thierry, and who, he was aware, had received orders to join him without loss of time. Trusting with too great confidence to this assistance, Sacken, instead of inclining to his left, as he might have done, to facilitate his junction with York, resolved to push straight on, and endeavour to force his passage through the opposing columns, by the valley of the Petit Morin. He formed his troops, in consequence, in order of battle; the centre, on the great road from La Ferté-sous-Jouarre to Montmirail; the right, on the village of Marchaix, near the river of the Petit Morin,² and the left in the open ground

² Dan. 109,
110. Koch,
i. 240, 241.
Plotho, iii.
179, 180.
Lab. ii. 189,
190. Die
Grosse Chron.
ii. 398, 399.

towards the village of Fontenelle, where it was hoped they would speedily be joined by York's corps, coming up from Chateau-Thierry.

As the French troops came up to Montmirail, they marched out of the town, and, forming on the opposite side, commenced the attack upon the Russians. The fire began at eleven o'clock, and soon became extremely warm on both sides; forty pieces of cannon, arrayed along the Allied front, long kept the French at bay, and the village of Marchaix, where Scherbatoff commanded the Russian right, was three times taken and retaken at the point of the bayonet. Meanwhile York himself arrived, but reported that his troops could not appear on the ground till three o'clock, and that his whole artillery had been left at Chateau-Thierry, from the experienced impossibility of dragging it forward in the wretched state of the roads. At the very time that this depressing intelligence was received by the Allies, Mortier came up with the Old Guard, the cuirassiers, and the Guards of Honour, to the aid of the French; and Napoleon, having now got his reserves in hand, and seeing the decisive moment arrived, ordered a general attack on the whole of Sacken's line, but taking care to direct the weight of his force against the Russian left near Fontenelle, in order to throw it back on the centre, and cut off the enemy from the line of their junction with York, or approach to Blücher.¹

If the attack was vigorous, however, the defence was not less obstinate; ranged behind hedges and in farm-offices, the Russian tirailleurs long retarded the advance of the enemy; and when at length they were forced back, the mutual fury of the combatants brought them, with loud cries on both sides, to the decisive shock of the bayonet. Success was varied in this dreadful encounter—in some places the French were forced back, in others they penetrated the Russian line; but at this decisive moment Napoleon ordered up the cuirassiers and Guards of Honour to charge the half-broken masses of the enemy. As these gallant cavaliers defiled past the Emperor, he said to them, "Brave young men! there is the enemy! Will you allow him to march to Paris?"—"We will not allow him!" exclaimed the horsemen, shaking their sabres aloft, and

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46.
Battle of
Montmirail.

¹ Koch, i.
240, 241.
Dan. 111,
112. Vaud.
i. 312, 318.
Plötho, iii.
180, 181.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii 398,
399.

47.
Brilliant vic-
tory of the
French.

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¹ Dan. 111,
112. Koch,
i. 240, 241.
Fain, 94, 95.
Lab. ii. 192,
193. Vaud.
i. 312, 322.
Ploto, iii.
180, 182.
Clausewitz,
vii. 424.

48.
Actions on
the day fol-
lowing the
battle.
Feb. 12.

rending the air with their cries ; and instantly breaking into a charge, fell upon the enemy with such fury that the victory in that quarter was speedily decided. In vain York now came up with several brigades of Prussians, though without artillery, which could not be dragged through the deep clay ; they, too, were broken by the French cavalry, and shared the general ruin. Ney and Mortier carried the farm of Grenois amidst vehement cheers, and drove the Russian left back upon the centre, which, with the right, retired across the fields towards Chateau-Thierry, covered by Wassilchikoff's dragoons, which, with the utmost gallantry, repulsed the repeated charges of the French cuirassiers.¹

In this bloody combat the Allies lost three thousand men killed and wounded, and a thousand prisoners, beside nine guns, which stuck fast in the mud, and could not be drawn off when the corps retreated. The French loss did not exceed one thousand. It was only by the utmost exertions, and harnessing fifty hussars and hulans with long ropes to each gun, that the remainder were got away during the darkness and confusion, while torches were displayed every hundred yards to illuminate the gloom. Napoleon passed the night at the farm-house of Grenois, sleeping on the straw, in the midst of smoking ruins from which the enemy's dead had just been removed ; and next morning by daybreak he was on horseback, at the head of his Guards, to pursue the Allies. The Prussian general, Horn, was stationed to keep the enemy in check with twenty-four squadrons, which had not hitherto suffered in the conflict. He arranged these troops in two lines, the first of which charged the enemy. They were received, however, with such vigour by Ney, at the head of the French dragoons, that the first line was at once routed and driven back upon the second, which was also thrown into confusion, and fled. Immediately the French cavalry pushed on, and swept round the squares of Russian infantry, which had barely time to form in rear of the horse ; two of them were broken in the tumult, and three pieces of cannon taken, besides a thousand prisoners.² Meanwhile, however, the main body of the Russians and Prussians succeeded in crossing the Marne, and breaking down its

² Ploto, iii.
183, 184.
Dan. 113,
114. Koch,
i. 252, 253.
Vaud. i. 325,
327. Claus.
vii. 424.

bridges, which prevented the further pursuit of the enemy, and placed them, for the time at least, in a situation of security. But in this day's combat they had lost two thousand more of their best soldiers, besides several guns abandoned in the retreat, making their total loss in the two days, seventeen guns, five standards, and six thousand men.

By directing his course to the left, and marching on the first day straight to Chateau-Thierry, without seeking to encounter Napoleon at all, there can be no doubt that Sacken might have avoided this serious disaster, and joined Blucher with his forces untouched. But his orders from the field-marshal were precise, to march to join him by Montmirail; and, like a good soldier, he obeyed his instructions, though to the evident danger of himself and his troops. Well, therefore, did he merit the encomium of the biographer of Blucher—"Sacken may have committed an error of judgment on this occasion, but it was the error of a hero too confident of his own strength: we had few generals equal to him; only such as he might hope to vanquish Napoleon."¹ While the Emperor in person was gaining these splendid successes against the corps of Olsoofief and Sacken, Blucher remained at Vertus, with hardly any troops at his disposal, anxiously waiting the arrival of Kleist's and Kaptsevitch's corps. It may be conceived with what impatience the impetuous veteran remained in this state of forced inaction, when fresh accounts of Napoleon's successes were every hour received; when the fugitives from Champaubert were coming straggling in, and the distant roar of the cannon at Montmirail announced Sacken's danger. But, notwithstanding his ardent desire to join his comrades, and, if he could not avert their calamities, to share their fate, he was unable to move a single step in advance, from his total want of cavalry, and the presence of Marmont with a corps of fifteen, which report had magnified to thirty thousand men, at Etoges, directly between him and his lieutenants.²

At length, however, Kleist and Kaptsevitch having arrived, and the remains of Olsoofief's corps and two regiments of cuirassiers having joined, he advanced at the head of twenty thousand combatants to Etoges, which

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49.
Heroic devotion of Sacken to his orders.

¹ Varnhagen von Ense, Feldzug von Blucher, 274.

Feb. 12.
² Fain, 97.
Plötho, iii.
185, 186.
Dan. 115.
Koch, i. 235.
Valentine, ii.
146. Die
Grosse Chron.
ii. 403, 404.

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50.

Kleist joins
Blucher, who
advances
towards
Sacken.
Feb. 13.

Marmont evacuated at his approach, retiring towards Chateau-Thierry, where Napoleon lay with the main body of his forces. An interesting scene had occurred in that town on the preceding day. The inhabitants, on the night of the action in front of the town, after the combat of Montmirail, had been overwhelmed by a mass of fugitives in disorder, who vented their rage and vexation at their defeat by every species of pillage and rapine, which all the efforts of the Russian and Prussian officers had been unable to restrain. Proportionally vivid was their joy on the following morning, when the town was evacuated by the enemy; and the indignant inhabitants, yet smarting under the brutality to which they had been subjected, went out in crowds along the banks of the Marne to meet their deliverers. Men, women, and children laboured assiduously to restore the bridges which the Russians had destroyed in their retreat, and to reconstruct a passage to their own soldiers. And when at length the boats were collected, the planks laid, and the troops began to defile across, loud shouts rent the air, and a confused multitude of all ages and both sexes, rushing forward, embraced with tears of joy the gallant warriors whose valour had delivered them from their oppressors.¹

¹ Lab. ii.
196, 197.
Koch, i. 235,
236. Dan.
115. Fain,
97. Plotho,
iii. 185, 186.
Valentine, ii.
147. Die
GrosseChron.
ii. 404, 405.

51.

Battle of
Vauchamps.
Feb. 14.

Napoleon was no sooner informed of the advance of Blucher to Etoges, and thence towards Montmirail, than he set out from Chateau-Thierry on the evening of the 13th with his Guards and the greater part of his forces, and arrived at the latter town at eight on the morning of the 14th. Marmont had just evacuated, after considerable fighting, the village of VAUCHAMPS, and was retreating along the road to Montmirail, when the well-known ensigns of the Guard were seen on the highway, and a powerful body of cuirassiers announced the presence of the Emperor. Instantaneous was the effect of this intelligence upon the spirit of the troops: it seemed as if the wand of a mighty enchanter had given an electric shock to every soldier on the field. Immediately the retreat was suspended; the cavalry, hurrying to the front, charged with boldness and rapidity; the skirmishers fell back, and gave place to deep columns of infantry, boldly advancing to the attack; the batteries were reinforced, and fired with increased vivacity; aides-de-camp were

seen galloping in all directions; and the air resounded with cries of *Vive l'Empereur*! It was now the Prussian general's turn to halt, and make his dispositions for defence. Ziethen, who headed the vanguard, was soon forced back in disorder upon the main body, which had barely time to form square when a numerous body of cavalry assailed it. The German cuirassiers were speedily overthrown, and the line of horsemen, headed by Grouchy, swept round the squares on two sides: one was broken and most of the men made prisoners, but the others received them with a sustained rolling fire, and the charge was repulsed. As the increasing numbers, however, and augmented boldness of the enemy, left no doubt of the presence of the Emperor with an overwhelming superiority of force, Blucher felt the necessity of retiring, and commenced his retreat in squares, the artillery being placed in the intervals, with Kleist on the right and Kaptsevitch on the left.¹

And now commenced a combat, which has shed as immortal a lustre on the steadiness of the Russian and Prussian troops, as the previous brilliant successes had secured for the French Emperor and his army. The retreat was conducted along the high-road, which traverses a flat and open country, running in a straight line, as is usual in that part of France, between rows of lofty elms.² On this *chaussée* the artillery retired, firing incessantly as it receded on the pursuers, while the squares of infantry marched abreast of it in the fields on either side. Slowly, and in perfect order, the Allied squares fell back without either hurry or disorder, as on a field-day at St Petersburg, and then appeared in their highest lustre the marvels of military discipline. In vain the French cuirassiers, with devoted gallantry, and animated by the presence of the Emperor, swept round the steady walls of steel, and, approaching to the very edge of the bayonets, strove to force their way in, wherever the discharge of the cannon tore a chasm, or the fall of the wounded presented an opening. Instantly closing up, these noble veterans still preserved their array unbroken; and the squares, though sorely diminished, and leaving a stream of blood, flowing from the dead and the wounded, along their path,³ still presented an undaunted front to the enemy.

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¹ Dan. 116,
117. Lab. ii.
200, 201.
Fain, 98, 99.
Plottho, iii.
187, 188.

52.
Glorious
retreat of
Blucher.
Feb. 14.

² Personal
observation.

³ Dan. 116,
117. Varn-
hagen von
Ense, 262.
Vaud. i. 333.
Koch, i. 260,
261. Plottho,
iii. 187.
Claus. vii.
425.

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Entranced with the spectacle, Blucher, forgetting his own danger, gazed on the scene, and halting his horse, exclaimed, "See how my brave Russians fight!" Thus combating, they reached Champaubert; but after passing through that town, the danger thickened; and such were the perils with which they were beset, that the bravest almost gave themselves up to despair.

53.
Imminent
danger of
Blucher.

While the Russian troops were delayed by defiling through the narrow causeway of Champaubert, Napoleon, who had a body of seven thousand admirable horse at his command, had despatched Grouchy at the head of three thousand of the swiftest among them, by a circuit round the village; and by great exertions, that indefatigable officer had so far outstripped the slower march of the Allied column, encumbered as it was by artillery and caissons, that he had gained the high-road two miles in advance, and was established in force on it before the Allies had extricated themselves from the houses. Meanwhile Generals Bordesoult and St Germain closely followed the rear of the retreating column; and, turning it on both flanks as it emerged into the meadows on the other side of the town, charged repeatedly, though without success, on three faces at once, the now wearied and almost exhausted body. By a continued fire of cannon and musketry the Allies succeeded in clearing the way through their constantly increasing enemies; and they had got to within half a mile of Etoges, where the danger would cease from the country being no longer practicable for cavalry, when all at once, on surmounting an eminence, they beheld Grouchy's horsemen drawn up in battle array before them, just as the sun set; and his last rays glanced on the long line of cuirasses which, stretching far across the road on either side, seemed to present an impassable barrier to their further advance. At this appalling sight, the boldest in the Allied ranks held his breath; total defeat appeared to be inevitable; the mighty heart of Blucher shuddered at the thought, that not himself only, but the whole corps, with Prince Augustus of Prussia, were on the point of being made prisoners. "Let us die rather!" said that gallant prince, drawing his sword, and preparing to charge headlong upon the enemy.¹ With mournful resolution Blucher

¹ Dan. 117,
118. Lab. ii.
200, 202.
Plothe, iii.
188, 190.
Koch, i. 260,
262. Beauch.
i. 280, 282.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii. 414,
415. Varn-
hagen von
Ense, 264.

stood in the front of the squares, in hopes of falling before he witnessed the disgrace of his country. "If you should be killed here," said his aide-de-camp Nostitz, "do you really think history will praise you for it?" Struck with these words, the field-marshal turned his horse's head, and said to Gneisenau—"If I do not perish to-day, then am I destined to live long, and I still hope to repair all."

That there was no hope, except in forcing their way through with the bayonet, was evident to all, from the commander-in-chief to the meanest private; and worthy indeed of a hero were the means which Blücher took to effect it. He commanded the drums to beat, the colours to be displayed, and, "with all the pomp and circumstance of war," the troops to bear down in a solid mass upon the enemy. Cheered by the martial sound, fresh vigour was inspired into the soldiers' breasts; the artillery and infantry opened such a fire in front, that the *chaussée* was cleared, and the weighty column, preceded by its guns, marched into the forest of sabres. Had the horse-artillery, which Grouchy had ordered to follow him, been able to keep pace with the cavalry, the column would probably have been broken, and the whole body, with the commander-in-chief, have been made prisoners; but it had stuck fast in the mud: the cavalry alone, without infantry or guns, was unable to withstand the shock, and the main body got through, with the commander-in-chief, Prince Augustus, and their whole staff. Enraged, however, at seeing their prey thus escaping them, Grouchy's horsemen closed on either side with such fury on the last squares, which had exhausted their ammunition, that several were broken, two Russian battalions cut to pieces, and two Prussian regiments compelled to surrender. The Russian horse-artillery were in the most imminent danger; but their commander, Colonel Shusherin, formed the cannoniers in line, and, headed by Blücher, charged, sword in hand, right through the French cavalry, and got clear off.¹

At length the wearied and bleeding column reached Etoges, where it was hoped rest and safety would be found; but there fresh combats awaited it. At ten at night, after it was quite dark, Marmont, at the head of

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54.
Its disastrous
termination.

¹ Beauch. i.
280, 281.
Lab. ii. 202.
Plotho, iii.
188, 190.
Dan. 118, 119.
Valentine, ii.
150. Die
Grosse Chron.
ii. 416, 417.

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55.

Desperate
action near
Etoges.

¹ Dan. 118,
119. Koch,
i. 261, 265.
Beauch. i.
282, 284.
Plotoh, iii.
188, 190.
Lab. ii. 202,
204. Die
GrosseChron.
ii. 417.

his corps, which was comparatively fresh, suddenly commenced an attack on General Udom's brigade, which was reposing near the entrance of the town, broke it during the confusion of a nocturnal combat, and took several guns. Following up his success, the French marshal pushed on amidst frightful confusion, and a second time the Allies found the line of their retreat to Bergères interrupted. But despair gave them almost supernatural strength. Firing and manœuvring were out of the question. In deep masses, and with loud hurrahs, they rushed upon the enemy, trampled them under foot, and, marching over their bodies, arrived at midnight at Bergères. The pursuit was now at an end: order was in some degree restored to the regiments; and, after a few hours' rest, the retreat was continued to Chalons, where the remains of this once splendid array arrived on the evening of the 15th, and at length found repose under cover of the Marne.¹

56.

Results of the
action.

Feb. 15.

² Plotoh, iii.
190. Dan.
119. Koch,
i. 264. Die
GrosseChron.
ii. 416.

In this terrible combat, Blucher, whose force at the commencement of the action did not exceed twenty thousand soldiers, lost six thousand men killed, wounded, and prisoners, or above a third of the troops engaged, fifteen guns, and eight standards. The prisoners, in number about two thousand five hundred, were almost entirely Prussians; for though several Russian squares were pierced through, and dreadful loss was sustained by them under the French sabres, hardly a man was taken; the Muscovites sternly combating to the very last, even when their ranks were broken, and further resistance in a military point of view was unavailing. The French loss did not exceed twelve hundred men. After the battle, the remains of the army of Silesia converged together from Chalons and Chateau-Thierry, behind the shelter of the Marne, and collected their shattered bands in cantonments on the north-east of that river, but weakened by the loss of fully twenty thousand men since Napoleon's fatal irruption had commenced, six days before, from the side of Sezanne.²

The night after the battle of Vauchamps, Napoleon returned to Montmirail, where he slept; and, deeming nothing done while any thing remained to do, instead of giving repose to his wearied troops, which had now

marched and fought for six days incessantly, he sent advices to Victor and Oudinot, that he would debouch on the following day in the valley of the Seine in their rear, by Guignes. The extreme badness of the cross roads, from the valley of the Marne to that of the Seine, having rendered this impossible by the direct line, he left his other troops in the neighbourhood of Chateau-Thierry and Montmirail, to watch the broken remains of the army of Silesia; and he himself, with his faithful Guards and cuirassiers, whom nothing could exhaust, took the route of Meaux, from whence on the following morning he turned to the left, and moved on Guignes, through the forest of Brie, by the *chaussée* of Fontenay. Meanwhile all Paris was thrown into transports of joy by the arrival of successive couriers, who brought intelligence of the victories of Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vau-champs. The bulletins, which exaggerated these glorious victories, diffused a universal enchantment; the genius of the Emperor seemed to have restored the days of Arcola and Rivoli; while a long column of seven thousand prisoners, taken in these combats, who were conducted along the Boulevards, preceded by military music and almost triumphal pomp, gave confirmation strong of the reality of the Emperor's achievements.¹

While these memorable events were in progress on the banks of the Marne, changes, attended in the end with still more important consequences, were taking place on the banks of the Seine. The Allied sovereigns had made their entry into Troyes on the 7th of February without resistance, a few hours after Napoleon with his troops had left it. Although the ancient capital of Champagne had much declined, under the government of Napoleon, from its former splendour, when it had forty thousand souls within its walls, while it could not now boast of above twenty thousand inhabitants; yet its occupation was of the highest importance, both as regarded the physical necessities and moral influence of the Allied arms. Not only had the town itself considerable resources, especially for the sick and wounded, whose number was now very large in their army; but, being the centre where all the roads and communications of the province met, or intersected each other, it afforded the most valuable facilities

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57.
Napoleon
crosses over
to the valley
of the Seine.

Feb. 15.

Feb. 16.

¹ Koch, i.
267, 270.
Fain, 100,
104. Dan.
120, 121.
Clausewitz,
vii. 458. Plo-
tho, iii. 238.

58.
Occupation of
Troyes by the
Allied arms.
Feb. 7.

CHAP.
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¹ Lab. ii. 170,
172. Beauch.
i. 228, 230.
Cap. x. 382,
383.

59.
Commence-
ment of a
movement in
favour of the
Bourbons.

for the procuring of provisions, which the concourse of such prodigious bodies of men and horses had now rendered a matter of very considerable difficulty, even in the heart of France. While the advanced guard of this army, consisting chiefly of the Würtembergers and Bavarians under Wrede, defiled along the road to Paris on the traces of Napoleon, the bulk of it, which was now concentrated together, continued passing through the town for twelve hours together, exhibiting a stupendous proof of the strength of the Allied forces; for at the end of that time, independent of two corps which were pursuing the French, a hundred thousand men were encamped around the walls of Troyes.¹

But the entrance of the Allied armies into this city was followed by a political movement of still higher importance, and which, in the end, exercised a most decisive influence on the fortunes of the Revolution, and the ultimate fate of Napoleon. It was here that the first movement in favour of the RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS took place.

Twenty-one years had now elapsed since the blood of Louis XVI. had flowed on the Place Louis XV., and England, amidst the storm of indignation excited by his fate, had been drawn unwillingly into the contest. Such had been the whirl of events which had immediately succeeded, and such the pressing interest of the glories and catastrophes which had since occurred, that the recollection of that illustrious race had almost been lost in France, and their name had nearly disappeared from the page of European history. The ancient loyalty of the monarchy, indeed, still burned in the bosoms of a few highly descended nobles in other parts of the empire, and in many generous breasts among all classes in La Vendée; and the clergy in great part still nursed in secret a predilection for the ancient race, as for the ancient faith: but the young and active part of the population, almost all who could influence thought or determine action, had been whirled, willingly or unwillingly, into the vortex of the Revolution. An entire generation of the ancient nobles had expired under the guillotine, perished amidst the horrors of the revolutionary prisons, or melted away, amidst poverty and oblivion, in foreign lands. Warm

as had been the sympathy, generous the hospitality, with which the emigrants had been at first received in every part of Europe, and especially in England, the rapidity of subsequent events, the intensity of subsequent interests, had been such that they were now in a great measure forgotten.

Numbers of them had taken advantage of the amnesty of Napoleon to return to their beloved country: not a few had yielded to the seductions of his antechambers, and settled down in the Tuileries under the imperial, as they had done under the royal regime. Above all, the total destruction of their properties had deprived them of almost all influence both at home and abroad; for although the sufferings of those who had been the victims of spoliation may at first excite a warm feeling of indignation, yet it insensibly gives way in process of time to the experienced inconvenience of relieving their necessities. It is rare to see a feeling of pity which can long survive repeated demands for money. The general irreligion and consequent selfishness of all the more elevated or influential classes in France, both before and since the Revolution, had deprived the cause of ancient loyalty of its only source of lasting support—a sense of duty springing from obligations superior to this world. Thus, though there were still many Royalists, especially in the provincial towns of France, they were wholly powerless as a political party. They were regarded by the active and energetic portion of the people, rather as a respectable relic of the olden time, than as a body which could ever again rise to power in the state; and it may safely be affirmed, that without external aid the cause of the Restoration was hopeless in France, unless possibly from the sufferings produced by a long course of disastrous revolutions.

Notwithstanding all this, however, a certain organisation in favour of the exiled family had throughout all the Revolution existed in the country, and it had recently acquired greater vigour and efficiency from the unexampled disasters which seemed to threaten the imperial dynasty with ruin. The principal ramifications of this quiescent conspiracy, as might naturally have been expected, were to be found in La Vendée, Brittany,

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60.
Extraordi-
nary oblivion
of the Royal
Family of
France dur-
ing the Revo-
lution.

61.
Royalist
organisation
existing in
France.

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and in the south of France ; but it was not without its leaders and adherents in the capital. There, some of the principal partisans of the Revolution, true to the polar star of worldly ambition, were anxiously watching the progress of events ; and, without as yet engaging in any overt act against the reigning dynasty, were secretly preparing to abandon their principles and their benefactor, and range themselves on the side of whatever party might appear likely to gain the ascendancy in the crisis which was approaching. The vast fabric of Napoleon's power, based on the selfish passions, and strengthened by worldly success, was already beginning to break up, even in its centre, on the approach of adversity. But, independent of these discreditable, though powerful Allies, a noble band of elevated and generous spirits, alike untainted by the crimes and unseduced by the allurements of the Revolution, were bound together by the secret tie of fidelity to misfortune. Their number, indeed, as might be expected in a selfish and irreligious age, was small ; but their courage was great, their constancy respectable, and their power in a crisis might be expected to be far beyond what their physical strength or political influence would have prognosticated.¹

¹ Cap. Hist. de la Rest. i. 262, 263. Beauch. ii. 44, 45.

62.
Royalist
committees
in Paris and
the west of
France.

The proceedings of the Royalist association at Bordeaux were under the direction of M. Taffard de St Germain, and included the heads of many of the noblest families in the south and west of France, especially the Duc de Duras, M. Adrien de Montmorency, M. de la Rochejaquelein, and M. de la Ville de Beaugé ; while the committee in Paris embraced the Ducs de Fitzjames and de la Tremouille, M. Polignac, and M. Sosthene de la Rochefoucault. Though this Royalist confederacy subsisted in secret throughout all the changes of the Revolution, the Consulate, and the Empire, yet its proceedings had never assumed an active character, till the misfortunes of Napoleon, and the retreat of the imperial armies across the Rhine, afforded a prospect of a speedy political revolution. Then active conferences commenced in profound secrecy at the Chateau d'Usse in Touraine, a seat of the Duc de Duras ; while the Duc de Fitzjames, and other leaders at Paris, entered the National Guard of that capital, which the Emperor had recently called out, to be

² Beauch. ii. 44, 47. Cap. i. 262. Hist. de la Restauration, i. 262, 264.

in a situation to take advantage of any crisis that might be approaching.

While the royalist party, during the long and dreary years of revolutionary ascendancy, were thus in silence adhering to their principles, and waiting the return of more prosperous fortune, the exiled prince, afterwards Louis XVIII., retired from one place of asylum to another as the French power advanced, till at length he was entirely driven from the continent of Europe, and forced to take refuge on the British shores. He had, in the first instance, after dwelling a few months at Hamm, established himself with his court of emigrants at Verona, where he assumed the title of regent of France; and his proceedings were mainly under the direction of a zealous and indefatigable royalist, the Count d'Antraigues. Meanwhile the Comte d'Artois was at St Petersburg, where his credit was so high with the Empress Catharine, that the regency was recognised, and he received a splendid sword from her, with the hope "that it might open him the gates of France, as it had done to his ancestor Henry IV." The Comte d'Artois, however, was a generous man, 1793. but not a soldier or the leader of an army; he showed so little zeal in the cause, that a project, which at one period had been agitated, of intrusting to him the command of thirty thousand Russians, to act on the coast of La Vendée, was abandoned; and he returned to London, where he sold the sword for four thousand pounds, and distributed the price among the most necessitous of his companions in misfortune. Subsequently, the reluctance which that prince evinced to put himself at the head of the expedition to Quiberon Bay, and his return from L'isle Dieu, without landing, to England, contributed powerfully to the disasters of that ill-fated enterprise, and called forth the loudest complaints from the gallant Chouan chiefs.^{1*}

Meanwhile Louis XVIII., under the name of the Comte de Lille, lived frugally and in retirement at Verona, until the near approach of Napoleon's victorious arms, in 1796, obliged him to quit the territories of the republic, which

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63.

Fortunes
of Louis
XVIII.
and the
Comte
d'Artois
during this
time.

1795.

¹ Cap. Hist.
de la Restau-
ration, i. 68,
72.

* "Sire! The cowardice of your brother has ruined all. He could not appear on this coast but to lose or save every thing. His return to England has decided our fate. Nothing remains for us now but to die in vain for your majesty."—CHARETTE to LOUIS XVIII., 14th July 1795. CAPEFIGUE, *Histoire de la Restauration*, i. 89.

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64.

Subsequent
migrations of
the Royal
Family.

1799.

¹ Cap. i. 172,
184.

65.

Who at
length are
driven to seek
refuge in
Great
Britain.
Jan. 21,
1801.

Dec. 2, 1804.

1805.

² Cap. i. 172.

he did, after having in vain solicited the suit of armour which Henry IV. had presented to the Senate of Venice. He afterwards established himself at Blanckenburg, where various efforts were made, which have already been mentioned, without success, to induce Buonaparte to play the part of General Monk, and facilitate the restoration of the royal family to the throne of France. The implication of the royalists, however, in the conspiracy of the club of Clichy, in 1797,* rendered it necessary for Louis XVIII. to retire further from the wrath of the enraged republicans; and he withdrew to Mittau in Livonia, where he enjoyed a pension of 200,000 roubles, or £25,000 a-year, from the Emperor Paul, which sufficed for the expenses of the exiled court. He was here afterwards joined by the Duc and Duchesse d'Angoulême, the former of whom had served with credit in the royalist corps of the Prince of Condé, while the latter brought to that distant solitude the recollection of the Temple, and the sympathy and commiseration of all Europe.¹

The sudden and unlooked-for conversion, however, of the fickle Paul to the alliance of the First Consul, immediately brought about a rigorous order to the august exiles to quit the Russian dominions in the depth of winter. They sought refuge in Prussia, where they were only admitted as private individuals; while, during the whole time, the Comte d'Artois remained in the asylum he had obtained from the British government, in the palace of Holyrood, at Edinburgh. Louis XVIII. subsequently passed into Sweden, where he issued from Colmar, on the shores of the Baltic, two solemn protests, which have already been given, against the assumption of the imperial dignity by Napoleon.† He returned, on the breaking out of the war between Russia and France in 1805, to his former residence at Mittau; but the peace of Tilsit, and subjection of Russia to the influence of France, having rendered that asylum no longer secure, he resolved to seek a last refuge on the British shores, and for that purpose embarked, with the whole royal family except the Comte d'Artois, who was already at Holyrood, on board the Swedish frigate *Fraya*, and reached Yarmouth in the middle of August 1807.²

* *Ante*, Chap. xxiv. § 37.† *Ante*, Chap. xxxviii. §§ 51, 57.

The arrival of the illustrious exiles threw the British cabinet into some perplexity. Not that they had the slightest hesitation as to giving them that refuge in misfortune, which is at once the first duty and noblest privilege of an independent state to extend to suffering innocence; but that the *character* in which they were to be received involved an important question, which had never been fairly mooted since the commencement of the war, and the decision of which might exercise an important influence upon its ultimate issue, as well as the unanimity with which it was now prosecuted by the British nation. This was nothing less than the question—whether the object of the contest was to effect the restoration of the Bourbons to the French throne, or simply to provide security and maintain independence for the British nation. If the Comte de Lille was recognised and treated as Louis XVIII. king of France, it would involve the British government either in an interminable war with Napoleon, or the abandonment of a sovereign whose title they had expressly and solemnly recognised; and it would afford the Opposition a pretext, of which they would gladly avail themselves, for representing the contest, not as one of defence and necessity on the part of England, but of aggression and injustice, to force upon France a dynasty of which the majority of the nation disapproved.

There appeared, also, not a little inconsistency in a nation which had itself assumed the right of choosing its rulers, now denying that right to another; and in the descendants of the house of Brunswick proclaiming to the world their recognition of the indefeasible right to that of Bourbon. Above all, it was of importance not to change the object of the war, which never had been to force a government upon an unwilling people, but solely to prevent that people from forcing one upon its neighbours; not to create a crusade for legitimacy, but to stop one for revolution. Influenced by these considerations, the majority of the British cabinet, after an anxious deliberation, which lasted three days, ranged themselves on the side of Mr Canning, who resisted the recognition of the illustrious stranger as king;² and by a cabinet minute he was informed, that he should receive a secure

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66.

His reception
and estab-
lishment in
Great
Britain.
Aug. 1807.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1808, 274.

67.

Difficulties
with which
the question
as to the
character of
his reception
in England
was sur-
rounded, and
course
adopted.

² Cap. i. 194,
195. Ann.
Reg. 1808,
274.

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68.
Louis
XVIII.
lands, and
remains in
England.

and honourable asylum in Great Britain, but that he must not expect an express acknowledgment of his title to the throne.*

Louis XVIII., accordingly, resided in England till the fall of Napoleon, as a private but illustrious individual, and largely participated in the hospitality which its nobles and people have ever bestowed upon greatness in misfortune. He at first dwelt in Gosfield Hall, a seat of the Duke of Buckingham, where he was soon after joined by the Duc and Duchesse d'Angoulême, and the Duc de Berri; but in 1810 he quitted that residence for Hartwell, another seat of the same noble family, where he remained till the restoration. The Comte d'Artois, meanwhile, continued to sojourn with a small suite at the ancient palace of Holyrood, Edinburgh. By a singular coincidence, but strongly descriptive of the vicissitudes of time, the heir-apparent to the French throne, who afterwards mounted it only to feel the bitterness of royalty, spent the long and dreary years of exile in the ancient seat of the Stuart family, in the towers which had witnessed the distresses of Mary, the most beautiful queen of France, and the most unfortunate of the queens of Britain; and in the halls where fortune for a brief period had permitted to Charles Edward, when contending on the principle of legitimacy, with the aid of a gallant people, for the throne of his fathers, the splendours of royal elevation and the enjoyment of chivalrous devotion.¹

¹ Cap. i. 180,
196.

69.
First mea-
sures of
the Royalists
in France.

But, how unwarlike soever the dispositions of the Bourbon princes might be, and seriously as they might prefer the pacific retreats of Hartwell and Holyrood to the cares and the honours of royalty, the time at length arrived when it was no longer possible for them to remain in privacy; and when, willing or unwilling, they were of necessity forced into action. The approach of

* "If the chief of the Bourbon family consents to live amongst us in a manner suitable to his actual situation, he will find a secure and honourable asylum; but we are too well aware of the necessity of securing for the war in which we are engaged the unanimous support of the English people, to do any thing that might endanger the popularity which has hitherto attended the war. By recognising Louis XVIII. as king, we should only offer a favourable occasion to the enemies of the government, to accuse it of introducing foreign interests into a war, of which the object is purely British security."—*Cabinet Minute*, August 27, 1808: given in *CAPEFIGUE*, i. 195.

the Allied armies to the Rhine, the passage of that river, and successful invasion of the eastern departments, the establishment of Wellington in the southern states of France, both roused into activity the dormant flame of loyalty in the provinces, and loudly called for the appearance of one or more princes of the royal blood on the soil of the monarchy, to combine the scattered efforts of its adherents, and assert the pretensions of the exiled family to the throne. Moreau had been looked to by them as a second Pichegru; proclamations were prepared to be addressed by him to Napoleon's soldiers: his death was regarded at Hartwell as the greatest calamity which had been sustained by the regal cause since the execution of Louis XVI. At the moment when the Allied armies crossed the Rhine, Louis XVIII. addressed a proclamation to the Senate, calling on them to co-operate with him in overturning the tyranny of Napoleon; and circulated widely a secret address among all persons in authority whose dispositions were thought to be favourable—a letter in which, like a man who knew the character of the persons with whom he had to deal, he spoke little of honour or loyalty, but much of titles, dignities, and offices to be preserved, and injuries forgotten.¹*

Application was at the same time made to the British government, for the Bourbon princes to be permitted to join the different armies on the French territory; and the cabinet of St James's, after much deliberation, proceeding from a desire to do nothing which might indicate a disposition to coerce the wishes of the French people in the choice of their government, granted them permission to go, but as simple volunteers only. The current of events, however, ran too strongly to be arrested by these prudential measures, how judicious soever they may have

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¹ Beauch. i.
40, 49. Cap.
i. 249, 252.

70.
And departure of the
Bourbon
princes for
its shore.

* "The King, availing himself of every opportunity of making known to his subjects the sentiments with which he is animated, has charged me to give, in his name, to ——— all the assurances which he can desire. His majesty is well aware how much ——— has in his power, not only as regards endeavouring to shake off the yoke which oppresses him, but in seconding one day, by his intelligence, the authority destined to repair such a multitude of evils. The promises of the King are nothing but the consequences of the engagements he has undertaken in the face of Europe, which are—to forget the errors of his subjects, to recompense services, stifle resentments, legitimatise rank, consolidate fortunes; to bring about, in short, nothing but an easy transition from present calamities and alarms, to future tranquillity and happiness."—LE COMTE BLACAS. Hartwell, 1st December 1813.—See CAPEFIGUE, *Hist. de la Restauration*, i. 250.

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Feb. 2.

¹ Cap. Hist.
de la Restau-
ration, i. 249,
253. Beauch.
i. 40-54.

71.
Interview of
the royalist
leaders at
Troyes with
Alexander.

Feb. 11.

been. The princes set out under this permission, restricted as it was. The Comte d'Artois left Holyrood-house, and landed at Rotterdam on the 2d of February; from whence he proceeded towards the headquarters of the Allied armies, by Bâle, Vesoul, and Langres: the Duc d'Angoulême embarked for Spain, to join Wellington in the south of France, to be in readiness to take advantage of any royalist movements that might occur in that quarter; while the Duc de Berri set sail for Jersey, to be at hand, in case of the outbreak of a royalist insurrection, which was thought to be in preparation in Brittany and La Vendée.

It was at this critical moment that the Allied monarchs entered Troyes, and for the first time were brought in contact with the royalists of France. In common with all its other provinces, the few remaining adherents of the ancient regime had received a great impulse in that city, which was the residence of the principal royalist families of the east of France, from the rapid progress of the Allied arms. The retreat of Napoleon towards Paris after the disastrous battle of La Rothière, seemed certainly to presage his approaching fall. Several gentlemen attached to the old family having resolved to commence the movement, assumed the white cockade after the Allies entered Troyes, and earnestly solicited an interview with the Emperor Alexander, which was at length granted. The Marquis of Widranges and M. Goualt were the persons who spoke on the occasion: they had suspended on their breasts the cross of St Louis and white cockade, the wearing of which was forbidden in the empire under pain of death. "We entreat your Majesty," said they, "in the name of all the respectable inhabitants of Troyes, to accept with favour the wish which we form for the re-establishment of the royal house of Bourbon on the throne of France." "Gentlemen," replied Alexander, "I receive you with pleasure; I wish well to your cause, but I fear your proceedings are rather premature. The chances of war are uncertain, and I should be grieved to see brave men like you compromised or sacrificed. We do not come ourselves to give a king to France; we desire to know its wishes, and to leave it to declare itself." "But it will never declare itself as long as it is under the

knife," replied the Marquis ; "never as long as Buona-
parte shall be in authority in France will Europe be
tranquil." "It is for that very reason," replied the
Czar, "that the first thing we must think of is to beat
him—to beat him—to beat him." Alexander's humane
prudence would appear to have been inspired by the
spirit of foresight on this occasion ; for the day on which
this conversation occurred at Troyes was the very one
which was marked by the catastrophe at Champaubert.
The Marquis Widranges, disappointed in his hopes of
obtaining a declaration in favour of the Bourbons from
the Allied sovereigns, went on to Bâle, where he joined
the Comte d'Artois, while M. Goualt, unhappily for him-
self, remained at Troyes. At the same time a person
styling himself St Vincent, but who in reality was the
Marquis de Vitrolles, one of the most devoted adherents
of the ancient dynasty, arrived at the Allied headquarters,
bearing credentials, setting forth that he was entirely
worthy of confidence, from persons high in authority in
Paris, and entreating the monarchs to advance rapidly to
the capital. But the issue was still too doubtful in the
theatre of arms, and the divisions of the diplomatists
too wide in the cabinet, to permit of any decided step
being yet taken by the Allied sovereigns in favour of the
royalist party.¹

While the cause of the restoration in France was thus
rather adjourned than damped, by the prudent ambiguity
of the monarchs at Troyes, operations of a tardy and
indecisive character, but still attended with important
effects, had taken place on the part of the grand army,
on the banks of the Seine. Instead of pushing military
operations with vigour, and following closely the army
of Napoleon down the Seine, Schwartzemberg, acting
under the directions of his cabinet, which was desirous
above all things to gain time, and avoid precipitating
matters against Napoleon till the throne was at all events
secured for his descendants, put the main body of his
army into cantonments, contenting himself with sending
forward the corps of Wittgenstein and Wrede to follow
on the traces of the retreating French. From Troyes to
Paris, one road goes by Sens, Montargis, Nemours, and
Fontainebleau, by the left bank of the Seine the whole

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¹ Cap. i. 255,
259. Dan.
78. Beauch.
i. 240, 246.
Koch, i. 205.

72.
Operations
of the Allied
Grand Army
on the Seine.

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¹ Dan. 94, 95.
Koch, i. 279,
282. Burgh.
123, 124.
Jom. iv. 538,
539. Plotho,
iii. 213, 214.

73.
Advance of
the Allies to
Montereau.
Feb. 11.

Feb. 12.

Feb. 13.

² Beauch. i.
294, 300.
Burgh. 138.
Dan. 134,
135. Koch,
i. 286, 289.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
331, 333.

way. But Napoleon having retired by the right bank, or eastern side of that river, it was necessary for the pursuing army, if it proposed to maintain its wings abreast on both banks, and keep on the trace of the retreating army, to force the passage of the Seine at Nogent, Bray, or Montereau, the only points below Troyes on the road towards Paris where there are stone bridges capable of affording a secure passage to artillery. All these bridges were in possession of the French, and strongly guarded; Oudinot and Victor lay on the opposite bank, after the departure of Napoleon, with twenty-two thousand men;—a body which was, however, fast being increased by conscripts hurried up from Paris. But such was the superiority of the Allied forces, that these inconsiderable bodies of men could not have stood a day before them, if they had pressed on in good earnest for the French capital.¹

At length, having allowed his troops to repose four days around Troyes, to the infinite annoyance of Alexander, who burned with anxiety to push the war with vigour, Schwartzenberg, on the 11th, gathered up his gigantic array, and put his columns in motion to follow up the enemy. The Prince of Würtemberg took Sens by assault after a sharp conflict; and on the same day General Hardegg, with the vanguard of Wrede's corps, attacked the rear of the enemy near Romilly, and drove them into Nogent, which was stormed, after a most gallant resistance, by General Bourmont, and evacuated next day, after the bridge over the Seine had been destroyed.

The prisoners made in these conflicts having given the important information that Napoleon, with the main body of his forces, had diverged towards Sezanne, in the direction of Blucher's army, and that an inconsiderable cordon of troops alone remained in his front, Schwartzenberg resolved to act with more vigour. He accordingly, next day, crossed the corps of the Prince-Royal of Würtemberg and General Bianchi (who had succeeded Prince Colloredo in the command of his corps, the prince having been disabled by a wound on the 6th) over the Seine at Bray and Pont-sur-Seine, and moved them upon Provins and Montereau. The establishment of these powerful corps in that quarter, where there was no force of any magnitude to oppose them, led to the

most important results, and showed how speedily the war, at this period, might have been terminated by a vigorous and concerted movement of the whole Allied forces.

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Moret was occupied next day : Nemours was taken by Platoff, with a whole battalion : Seslavin, with his light horse, made himself master of Montargis, and pushed on his advanced posts to the gates of Orleans. The palace and forest of Fontainebleau fell into the hands of the Cossacks : Auxerre was carried by assault, and its garrison, which endeavoured to cut its way through the attacking force, put to the sword. The whole plain between the Seine and the Loire was inundated with the enemy's light troops, which already showed themselves beyond Fontainebleau on the road to the capital. Montereau was strongly occupied by the Austrians, while Schwartzberg's headquarters were advanced to Nogent, between which and Bray the immense reserves of the Allied grand army were placed. Paris was in consternation : already the reserve parks and heavy baggage of Victor had reached Charenton, within a few miles of its gates ; the peasants of the plain of La Brie, flying to the capital, reported that uncouth hordes with long beards, armed with lances, cut down trees on the sides of the highways, and roasted oxen and sheep whole, over fires kindled with their wood, which they devoured half raw. Meanwhile, fame, magnifying the approaching danger, already announced that two hundred thousand Tartars and Calmucks were approaching to sack and lay waste the metropolis of science and the arts.¹

74.
And Fontaine-
bleau and La
Brie.
Feb. 14 and
15.

¹ Koch, i.
286, 291.
Beauch. i.
294, 308.
Burgh. 138,
139. Dan.
134, 135.
Volderndorff,
iv. 8, § 121.

Such was the alarming state of affairs to the south of the capital, when Napoleon, at the head of his indefatigable guards and cuirassiers, came across to the valley of the Seine, by Guignes, through the forest of Brie. The advanced guard of this array found the roads covered with waggons converging from all quarters towards the capital, filled with the trembling inhabitants, who were flying before the Cossacks. Instantly the living loads were disburdened ; the waggons filled with the soldiers, or laid aside, and their horses harnessed to the guns ; and every horse and man that could be pressed from the adjacent villages, attached to the vehicles to hurry them

75.
Junction of
the army of
Napoleon
with Victor
and Oudinot.
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forward. It was full time. The plain of La Brie was covered with fire and smoke ; the retiring columns under Victor and Oudinot, severely pressed by the enemy, were straining every nerve to preserve the cross road to Châlons, by which Napoleon had promised to arrive. But so great was the superiority of the enemy, that it was doubtful whether they could maintain their ground for another hour, in which event the junction of the two armies would have been rendered impossible. No sooner, however, were the well-known standards of the cuirassiers seen, than a loud shout announced the arrival of the Emperor ; cries of *Vive l'Empereur* ran, like an electric shock, along the line ; the retreat was stopped at all points ; already the retiring columns were preparing to turn on their pursuers : while the Allies, sensible, from the change, of the presence of Napoleon, instantly became as cautious and circumspect as they had recently before been confident and audacious. Wearied with their unexampled exertions, the troops were halted where they had thus checked the advance of the enemy ; soon the soldiers sank to sleep on the very ground where they stood, and the headquarters of the Emperor were established in the village of Guignes, where he passed the night.¹

¹ Fain, 102,
103. Dan.
148. Lab. ii.
217, 218.
Koch, i. 300,
305.

76.
Advance of
Napoleon,
and combat
of Nangis.
Feb. 17.

In the course of the night, and early on the following morning, large reinforcements joined the French headquarters from the army of Spain. The arrival of these bronzed veterans, upon whose steadiness perfect reliance could be placed, and the successive coming up of the corps which had inflicted such wounds on the army of Silesia, enabled the Emperor, on the following morning, to resume the offensive at the head of fifty-five thousand men. Orders were given to the troops to collect bread for three days' march ; the knowledge that they were about to attack the enemy under the direction of Napoleon, coupled with their marvellous successes over the army of Silesia, had restored all their wonted enthusiasm to the soldiers. They marched as to assured victory. By daybreak the forward movement commenced at all points. Oudinot, supported by Kellerman's dragoons, pressed on the retiring columns of Wittgenstein, in the direction of Nogent ; Macdonald advanced towards Bray ; Gerard pushed the Bavarians with the utmost vigour back on

Villeneuve le Comte, and Donnemarie; while Victor was despatched towards Montereau, with orders to make himself master of its important bridge over the Seine that very night. Count Pahlen, who was at Mormant with Wittgenstein's advanced guard, consisting of three thousand infantry and eighteen hundred horse, was now in a most hazardous situation; for he was well aware he would be the first victim of the French Emperor's furious attack, and yet his orders were to remain where he was, as the arrival of Napoleon on the Seine had never been contemplated. In this extremity he remained all night under arms, resolved to resist to the last extremity. Shortly after daybreak the tempest was upon him, and he began slowly, and in the best order, to retreat towards Nangis, the infantry in squares, with the horse and some weak regiments of Cossacks and a few guns to protect the flanks and rear.¹

For two hours the retreat was conducted with perfect regularity, notwithstanding the incessant fire of the French horse artillery, and attacks of their cavalry: but at length the assaults became more frequent, and the veteran cuirassiers under Milhaud, who had just come up from Spain, burning with desire to restore the lustre of their arms, charged on three sides at once with such vehemence, that the cavalry were entirely routed, the guns taken, and the infantry broken. The defeat was now irretrievable. So complete was the disorder that Wittgenstein himself, who came up with reinforcements, was swept away by the torrent, and narrowly escaped being made prisoner. Eleven guns and forty caissons were captured, and two thousand one hundred men made prisoners, besides nine hundred who fell on the field of battle. So complete was the destruction of some of the Russian regiments, that that of Silenguinsk alone, which was not broken till after it had gallantly repulsed repeated charges of cavalry, lost one thousand three hundred and fifty-nine men; and it, with that of Revel, which suffered nearly as much, ceased to exist, and were marked in the muster-rolls as "sent to Plotsk to be recruited." Yet, though deeply affected by such a chasm in his devoted followers, Alexander retained no rancour towards Pahlen; and seeing him, for the first time after the combat, at

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¹ Dan. 150,
151. Koch,
i. 310, 313.
Lab. i. 218,
219. Fain.
104. Vaud.
i. 377, 379.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
329, 331.
Plotho, iii.
211.

77.
Defeat of
Pahlen.

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i Vaud. i.
377, 379.
Koch, i. 311,
313. Lab. i.
218, 219.
Dan. 152,
153. Die
Grosse Chron.
ii. 330, 331.

78.

Pursuit of
the Bavari-
ans to the
bridge of
Montereau.
Feb. 17.

the barrier of Paris said to him—"You think I am angry with you; but I know you were not in fault." The field of battle presented a striking proof of the profound and wide-spread excitement which this terrible contest had awakened throughout the world; for it showed the bodies of the hardy steeds of Tartary, and the fiery coursers of Andalusia, which had fallen in combat under the walls of Paris. It seemed to realise, after the lapse of a thousand years, that fabled conflict of the Saracens and Christians around that capital, in the time of Charlemagne, to which the genius of Ariosto has given immortality.¹

While this bloody combat was occurring under the eye of Napoleon on the left, the Bavarians in the centre rapidly retreated from their position at Villeneuve le Comte; and such was the fatigue of the cavalry of the Imperial Guard, who were intrusted with their pursuit, that they were unable to follow them. Oudinot, however, and Macdonald, pressed vigorously on Hardeg's corps, which also fell back, and took many prisoners and a large quantity of baggage. Victor, following up the Bavarians, came upon the division posted on the heights of Valjouan. They were immediately attacked in the most vigorous manner in front by General Gerard, and in rear by Bordesoult, and soon broken. Nothing but the failure of General L'Heritier, who neglected to charge the fugitives, as he might have done, when first thrown into disorder, preserved the Bavarian division from total ruin: as it was, they only made their escape in the greatest disorder, and after sustaining a very considerable loss. Such, however, was the exhaustion of Victor's troops, from the excessive fatigue which they had lately undergone, that he was unable to follow out his directions, by making himself master of the town and bridge of Montereau; in consequence of which the Bavarians, who had rallied under the protection of some squadrons of Schwartzberg's hulans, effected their retreat across the Seine at that place, though weakened by the loss of two thousand five hundred men. The enemy occupied in force the town of MONTEREAU, and the castle of Surville, which commanded the bridge. Their troops consisted of two Austrian divisions under Bianchi, and the Würtembergers, in all about eighteen thousand men.²

2 Vaud. i.
315, 318.
Koch, i. 315,
318. Plötho,
iii. 212, 214.
Burgh. 141,
142. Vold-
erndorff, iv.
8, 121.

When Schwartzenberg was made acquainted, which he was on the evening of the 17th, with these disasters which had befallen the two corps of Wittgenstein and Wrede, which had been pushed across the Seine, he immediately summoned a council of war, which was attended by the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia. It was evident to all that the misfortunes had been owing to the separation of the army of Silesia from the grand army; it was resolved, therefore, as soon as possible, to reunite them in the direction of Troyes, and give battle in front of that town. For this purpose orders were given to fall back at all points, while Blucher was directed, as soon as his troops were in a condition to resume offensive operations, to incline to his left, so as to facilitate the proposed junction. At the same period, principally to gain time, a flag of truce was despatched from the Allied headquarters to Napoleon, to say that they were surprised at the offensive movement made by the French army, as they had agreed to the terms of peace proposed by Caulaincourt at Chatillon, and had given orders to their plenipotentiaries to sign the preliminaries accordingly, and they proposed in consequence an immediate suspension of hostilities.¹

Colonel Par, who bore the flag of truce from the Allied headquarters, arrived at those of Napoleon late on the night of the 17th. The circumstance of the Allies proposing terms of accommodation after these defeats, coupled with the fact of a letter having been written by the Empress Marie Louise to her father, determined him to seize the opportunity of opening a communication directly with the Emperor Francis. The Council of State which had assembled at Paris to deliberate on the terms offered at Chatillon, to be immediately considered, had been, with the exception of one member, unanimously of opinion that they should be accepted. Napoleon, however, had always determined in his own mind to make the negotiation entirely dependent on the progress of military events; and he, accordingly, gave the strongest injunctions to Caulaincourt, however near he might come to the point, to avoid committing himself to any treaty without his special authority. The successes at Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamps, had entirely

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79.
The Allies
propose an
armistice.

¹ Burgh. 143.
Dan. 154.
Koch, i. 319.
Fain, 105.

80.
Napoleon
rises in his
demands at
the Congress,
and tries to
negotiate
separately
with Austria.

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¹ Fain, 94,
105, 106.
Burgh. 144.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
333, 334.

⁸¹.
Description
of Montereau.

² Personal
observation.
Beauch. i.
304, 305.
Cap. Hist. de
l'Empire, x.
390, 391.
Koch, i. 320,
321. Plotho,
iii. 214. Die
Grosse
Chron. ii.
334, 336.

confirmed him in these ideas ; and the very night the first advantage was gained, as already mentioned, he had written to Caulaincourt to try and gain time, and, above all things, to "*sign nothing*." His recent successes still further elevated his hopes, and he addressed a letter from Nangis to the Emperor of Austria on the same night, stating that he was extremely anxious to enter into a negotiation ; but that, after the brilliant victories he had gained, he now looked for more favourable terms than had been proposed at Chatillon. At the same time he wrote to Caulaincourt, that the *carte blanche* he had formerly received was merely to save Paris, which appeared to be endangered after the battle of La Rothière ; but that great successes had since been gained ; that the necessity no longer existed ; and, in consequence, his extraordinary powers were *recalled*, and henceforth the negotiation should pursue its ordinary course. Having done this, he resolved to delay for some days closing with the Allied advances towards an armistice, and to follow up with the utmost vigour the tide of success which was now setting in in his favour.¹

Situated twenty leagues to the south of Paris, at the confluence of the Seine and the Yonne, the town of Montereau presents one of the most agreeable objects in France to the gaze of the traveller. The part which lies on the left bank of the Yonne, which is the most considerable, is joined to the right bank by a bridge of stone. Another bridge, famous for having been the scene of the murder of the Duke of Burgundy in 1419, unites the opposite banks of the Seine. These two rivers, which unite at Montereau, with the numerous barks which carry on their active navigation, give the town a gay and joyous aspect, which is increased by the smiling appearance of the vineyards and meadows adjoining it on the south and east, and the country-houses and villas glittering around it in the sun. The traveller who approaches from the side of Paris, involuntarily halts on the summit of the heights of Surville, which overhang the town on the northern bank, to gaze on the lovely scene which lies, spread out like a map, beneath his feet :² he would do well to remember that there, beside the little cross adjacent to the chateau, stood Napoleon during one of the LAST

of his many victories. On the evening of the 18th the French troops assembled in imposing masses on these heights, which completely commanded the bridges and town beneath; the artillery of the Guard was placed on either side of the road near the cross, and the Emperor took his station in person amidst the guns, to direct their fire, for the enemy still held the town. They had strongly barricaded the bridges, and every thing presaged a bloody conflict.

It was not, however, till late in the day, and after a severe conflict, that these important heights fell into the hands of the French troops. Bianchi, fully sensible of their importance, had during the night occupied them in force with the troops of Würtemberg, strongly supported by artillery; and Victor, who in the morning commenced the attack on the position, was repulsed, and his son-in-law, the brave General Chateau, killed, when in person leading on the grenadiers to the assault. Gerard was upon this directed to supersede Victor in the command of his corps, and immediately advanced to the attack. Undismayed by the fire of forty pieces of artillery, which the German batteries poured upon him from the heights of Surville, he bravely and repeatedly led his troops almost to the very mouth of the guns. But it was in vain: the undaunted cannoniers made good the post assigned to them; noon was far past, and evening at that inclement season was fast approaching, while still the heights were in the hands of the enemy. Then Napoleon came up with the artillery and cavalry of the Guard, at the gallop, and, desirous of profiting by the few hours of daylight which still remained, he instantly brought forward forty pieces of the reserve artillery, and disposed his redoubtable Old Guard and cuirassiers to aid the renewed attack of Gerard with all their forces. Thirty thousand men, supported by sixty pieces of cannon, now marched fiercely forward, under the very eye of the Emperor, amidst cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* Despairing of maintaining his post, which was only defended by twelve thousand combatants, against such an accumulation of forces, the Prince of Würtemberg drew his men off towards the bridge in his rear;¹ at first in good order, and presenting an undaunted front

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82.
Battle of
Montereau.
Feb. 18.

¹ Koch. i.
321, 324.
Beauch. i.
314, 316.
Ploto, iii.
216, 217.
Burgh. 145.
Claus. viii.
306. Ploto,
iii. 215. Die
Grosse
Chron. ii.
340.

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83.
Defeat of the
Allies, who
are driven
beyond the
Seine.

to the imperial cavalry, which now thundered in close pursuit. But by degrees, as they descended the southern and steeper face of the heights towards the bridges, and got entangled in the hollow way through which the road passes to them, they fell into confusion; and infantry, cavalry, and artillery, breaking their array, rushed headlong to the only issue by which they could hope for escape from the bloody sabres of the cuirassiers.

The Prince-Royal of Würtemberg, however, at this dreadful moment exerted himself with equal skill and resolution to stem the torrent. He was at one time nearly enveloped by the French cavalry on the bridge, fighting with his own hand, to gain time for the troops to cross over; and by the vigour which he displayed, and the noble example which he set, he succeeded in enabling the greater part of them to get in safety to the other side, where they were received by Bianchi with his hitherto untouched Austrian divisions. Meanwhile, Napoleon had established himself with the artillery of the Guard on the now abandoned heights of Surville, and soon sixty pieces of cannon opened a close and concentric discharge on the dense masses which were crowding over the bridge. Such was the eagerness of the Emperor, that he resumed, after twenty years' cessation, his old occupation as a gunner; and, as at the siege of Toulon in 1793, himself levelled and pointed a cannon. Meanwhile, the Austrian batteries below, on the opposite bank, replied with vigour to the fire of the French pieces; and the old cannoniers of the Imperial Guard, hearing the whistle of the balls above their heads, besought the Emperor to retire from the front, to a situation of less danger. "Courage, my friends," he replied; "the bullet which is to kill me is not yet cast." Protected by the fire of such a powerful artillery on the heights above them, the mere discharges of which shivered the windows of the neighbouring chateau of Surville to pieces, the French chasseurs pressed so rapidly on the last columns of the Würtembergers, that there was no time to fire the mines for destroying the bridge;¹ the pursuing horsemen crossed over pell-mell with the fugitives, the division of Duhesme rapidly passed after them, and, amidst the shouts of the inhabitants, drove the enemy

¹ Burgh. 146.
Fain, 107,
108. Plotho,
iii. 216.
Koch. i. 323,
324. Beauch.
i. 315, 317.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
339, 340.
Volderndorf,
iv. 127.

entirely out of Montereau ; the Allies retiring after having destroyed the bridge over the Yonne, which stopped the pursuit, in the direction of Sens.

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This bloody combat, which was one of the most obstinately contested of the campaign, and inferior to few ever directed by Napoleon in brilliancy and valour, cost the French three thousand men killed and wounded, principally in consequence of the destructive fire of grape, so long kept up by the Würtemberg artillery from the heights of Surville. But the loss of the enemy was as great in killed and wounded, and they had to lament in addition above two thousand prisoners, six guns, and four standards. "My heart is relieved," said Napoleon, on beholding the flight of the Allies across the bridge: "I have saved the capital of my empire." Great indeed was the moral effect of these repeated successes of the Emperor, both upon his own and the Allied armies. It restored the *prestige* of his name, the magic of his renown, which the long-continued disasters in Russia and Germany had sensibly dimmed. The young conscripts deemed themselves invincible under his direction ; the veterans recommenced the stories of Austerlitz and Jena. Confounded by such a succession of disasters as had befallen their arms in so many different quarters, within so short a period, the Allied generals began seriously to fear that the star of Napoleon was again in the ascendant, and to resume, in the Austrian councils at least, their former dread of his arms. Orders were immediately issued to the whole army to retreat to a concentrated position in front of Troyes, where it was proposed to join Blücher and give battle ; the Seine was repassed at all points ; Fontainebleau, Nemours, and Montargis, were evacuated ; and the Allied host, retiring before the enemy, was soon assembled, still above a hundred thousand strong, between Nogent, Bray, and Troyes.¹

Wonderful as these successes were, they by no means came up to the expectations of the Emperor. His discontent was visible ; his disappointment broke out on all occasions, and he was in an especial manner misled in his ideas of what might have been effected, by the achievements of the troops who fought under his own eyes. When in presence of Napoleon, no fatigues could exhaust,

84.
Results of the battle, and general retreat of the grand Allied army.

¹ Moniteur, Feb. 21, 1814.
Fain, 107,
108. Burgh.
146, 147.
Dan. 157.
Koch, i. 326,
327. Die
Grosse
Chron. ii.
342, 343.

85.
Discontent of the Emperor Napoleon at his generals.

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1814.

no dangers appal, no difficulties impede them ; they made, without murmuring, almost superhuman exertions. But they were by no means either equally confident, or equally energetic, under the direction of his lieutenants ; and not unfrequently sank under the exhaustion consequent on the unparalleled activity by which he was now striving to make genius supply the want of numbers. He could not be brought, however, to comprehend this difference. He constantly expected the troops to achieve, under all circumstances, as much as he saw they did when animated by his own presence ; and never failed to ascribe to the weakness or indecision of the officers in command, the failure of any enterprise on which he had calculated as likely to produce brilliant results. His affairs were now so critical, that he could not afford to gain only half success ; nothing short of continued victory could extricate him from the host of enemies by whom he was encircled ; and he was well aware that even an inconsiderable failure in any serious combat might be attended by the most calamitous results. A sense of this both inflamed his expectations and increased his violence ; the most vehement ebullitions of wrath frequently took place against officers at the head of their troops ; and even his oldest and most esteemed marshals were rendered the victims of a disappointment, which was entirely owing to his expecting from them more than it was in the power of human strength to achieve.¹

¹ Fain, 108,
109. Koch, 1.
315.

86.
Disgrace of
Victor.

Victor was the first victim of these unbounded expectations and irritable moods of the Emperor. That marshal, as already noticed, had been ordered to push on to Montereau on the evening of the 17th, and doubtless great results might have been expected from the seizure of that important post and bridge over the Seine, at a time when two corps of the Allies, receding before Napoleon's columns, were still on the right bank of the river. In truth, however, Victor's men were so completely worn out with fatigue, that they were unequal to the task of carrying the position on the night when they arrived before it. But such was the Emperor's wrath at the attack not having been made, that he deprived Victor of the command of his corps, which he conferred on Gerard. Next evening, after the combat at Montereau

was over, the unhappy marshal presented himself before Napoleon to reclaim against his dismissal. He was received, however, with such a storm of invective, directed not only against himself, but against the duchess, his wife, whom Napoleon accused of keeping aloof from the Empress, and leaguings with the enemies of the court, that it was only by recalling to his recollection the Italian campaigns, where they had begun the career of arms together, that Victor succeeded so far in appeasing his wrath as to obtain in lieu of his corps, which had been conferred upon Gerard, the command of two divisions of the Guard.¹*

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¹ Fain, 109,
Moniteur,
Feb. 20, 1814.

Nor were inferior officers spared by the wrath which thus prostrated the marshals of the empire. L'Heritier was publicly reproached for having failed to charge at the decisive moment of the combat of Nangis; Guyot for having allowed some pieces of the artillery of the Guard to be surprised in bivouac the night before; General Dejean, one of the most distinguished officers of artillery, for having permitted the cannon ammunition to run short in the hottest of the fire at the heights of Surville; even the heroic Montbrun suffered the most cutting taunts for having, without resistance, abandoned the ridges and forest of Fontainebleau to the Cossacks. There can be no doubt that part of these reproaches were, in some degree, well-founded, though others were altogether unjust. But the necessity of making any of them public at this critical juncture was not equally apparent; and it was evident to all, both that the Emperor's fatigue and anxiety had fearfully augmented the natural violence of his temper,²

87.
And of De-
jean, L'Heri-
tier, and
Montbrun.

² Fain, 109,
110. Moni-
teur, Feb.
20, 1814.

* "At the conclusion of the conference, in which he had made no impression on the Emperor, Victor said that, if he had committed a military fault, he had expiated it dearly by the stroke which had cut off his son-in-law, General Chateau. At the name Napoleon evinced the warmest emotion; he heard only the grief of the marshal, and strongly sympathised with it. Victor, then resuming confidence, protested anew that he would not leave the army. 'I will shoulder a musket,' said he; 'Victor has not forgotten his old occupation: I will take my place in the Guard.' These words at length disarmed the Emperor. 'Well, Victor,' said he, stretching out his hand, 'remain with us. I cannot restore to you your corps, which I have bestowed on Gerard; but I give you two divisions of the Guard: go now, take the command of them, and let there be no separation betwixt us.' . . . Yet he was so far imbued with his feelings of resentment, that in the bulletin dated that day, giving an account of the combat of Montereau, he said, 'General Chateau will die: but he will die at least accompanied by the regrets of the whole army—a fate far preferable to that of a soldier who has only purchased the prolongation of his existence by surviving his reputation, and extinguishing the sentiments which French honour inspires in the circumstances in which we are placed.'"—FAIN, *Campagne de 1814*, 111-113, and *Moniteur*, 26th, Feb. 1814.

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88.
Napoleon's
steps for fol-
lowing up his
successes.

and that the necessities of his situation had made him expect and calculate on achievements, both from his officers and soldiers, which it was beyond human strength to effect.

The day after the battle Napoleon remained at Surville, while his advanced guards in all directions followed the Allied grand army up the valley of the Seine, towards Sens, Bray, and Nogent. Conceiving that Schwartzberg's retreat was now decidedly pronounced, and being well aware of the nervousness of the Austrian generals about their lines of communication, he at the same time wrote to Marshal Augereau to resume the offensive at Lyons, and threaten the rear of the grand army from the side of Macon. That marshal's force, which originally, as already mentioned, consisted of twelve thousand men, had been considerably augmented by two divisions of iron veterans, drawn from Suchet's army in Catalonia, and the levies in Dauphiny and Savoy, which were commanded by Generals Marchand and Serras. These reinforcements had enabled him to assume so threatening an attitude at Lyons, that General Bubna, who commanded the extreme Austrian left in that quarter, which did not muster above fifteen thousand sabres and bayonets, had been under the necessity of evacuating the valley of the Rhone below the Jura, and concentrating his forces in the neighbourhood of Geneva. The communication over Mont Cenis with the viceroy's army in the Italian plains, had been re-established, and the course of the Saone to Macon was entirely cleared of the enemy. Napoleon therefore, indulged sanguine hopes, and not without reason, that he would be able, by means of this auxiliary force, so to straiten the rear, and cut up the communications of the grand army, that their further stay in France would be rendered impossible: already he dreamed of fresh conquests beyond the Rhine; and in his exultation more than once said—"I am nearer Munich than the Allies are to Paris."¹

¹ Fain, 113,
115. Lab. ii.
224, 225.
Vaud. i. 391,
395. Plottho,
iii. 220, 221.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
346, 347.

But while Napoleon was, not altogether without reason, calculating upon these vast results from his successes, and looking to the incursions of his lieutenants to threaten the flanks and communications of the weightiest of his opponents, his own rear was menaced, and a new enemy was descending from the north, who in the end came to

tell with decisive effect upon the fortunes of the campaign. Notwithstanding the reluctance of Bernadotte to prosecute in person the invasion, and the long time which he had consumed in the separate contest with Denmark in the south of Jutland, the time had now arrived when it was no longer possible for him to avoid appearing, if not in person, at least by means of his generals, on the great theatre of action. The most urgent requisition had been made to him by the Emperor Alexander, to bring his forces into action; and as the peace with Denmark, and the blockade of Davoust in Hamburg by Benningsen's powerful army of reserve, forty-five thousand strong, which had been directed there after the battle of Leipsic, left him no longer an excuse, he was obliged, however reluctant, to advance towards the Rhine. On the 10th of February he arrived at Cologne, from whence, two days afterwards, he published a proclamation to the French people, in which he vindicated his invasion of his native country, by the anxious desire which he felt that it should no longer continue, as it had been, the scourge of the earth; and on the ground of the solemn assurance which, he declared, he had received from the Allied sovereigns, that they made war on France only to secure the independence of other states. Meanwhile Bulow, who commanded his advanced guard, had hitherto been unable to make any impression on Antwerp, even though aided by Sir Thomas Graham and eight thousand English troops. But he had been more successful at Bois-le-Duc, which was delivered up to him, with a hundred and fifty heavy cannon on its ramparts, by the inhabitants of the place. And Winzingerode having received considerable reinforcements at Namur, the siege of Antwerp was converted into a blockade; Bulow united the best part of his forces to those of the Russian commander, and both together took the road by Avesnes for Laon.¹

To reach the latter town, it was indispensable, in the first instance, to gain possession of the former, as it covered the road by which Laon was to be approached. But Chernicheff, with the Russian advanced guard, appeared before Avesnes at daybreak on the 9th February, and it surrendered without resistance, with its weak garrison of two hundred men. By this capture four

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89.

Advance of
the Crown
Prince of
Sweden to
the Rhine.

Feb. 12.

¹ Lab. ii. 106,
108. Dan.
121, 122.
Koch, i. 275.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
265, 270.
Plottho, iii.
197. Valen-
tin, ii. 97.

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1814.

90.

Advance of
Winzingerode to Laon,
and descrip-
tion of
Soissons.
Feb. 10.
Feb. 11.

hundred English and Spanish prisoners, taken during the Peninsular war, were set at liberty. Napoleon had never expected that the Allies would have entered France on this side, and the frontier fortresses were wholly unprovided with the means of making any resistance. Rheims opened its gates the very next day; and the whole country between the Sarre and the Meuse, in the rear, disgusted with the intolerable exactions of the French armies, received the Allies with open arms. But these easy successes led to another of a more difficult and important character. Soissons, commanding as it does the only bridge in that quarter over the Aisne, and lying on the great *chaussée* from Laon to Paris, as well as several other roads which intersect each other in its centre, is a fortress which, in a strategical point of view, is of the very highest importance. It is an old town, adorned by a massy Gothic church, and surrounded by antiquated walls, which, however, had been armed and repaired, and put in a respectable posture of defence. Green and level meadows immediately adjoin it on all sides; but they are confined to the vicinity of the river, and at the distance of half a mile on either side the road ascends the slopes of the more elevated plateau, on the summit of which it generally runs, and from the brows of which plunging shot may be sent by artillery into the town beneath, to which the cannon on its ramparts, pointed upwards, were little calculated to make an effectual reply. Notwithstanding this disadvantage, however, the capture of the place was not likely to be an easy enterprise, as Napoleon, sensible of its importance, had intrusted its defence to the brave General Rusca, one of his old companions in arms in the Italian campaigns, who had under his command the depot of six regiments of the line, a thousand National Guards, and a hundred gens-d'armes; in all about four thousand five hundred men.¹

¹ Personal observation.
Dan. 124,
125. Koch, i.
276, 277.
Lab. ii. 208,
209. Die
Grosse
Chron. ii.
281, 282.

91.

Preparations
for the storm-
ing of
Soissons.

Braving the resistance which might be expected from so determined a character as General Rusca, at the head of so respectable a force, General Chernicheff offered to carry it by a *coup-de-main*, and, for this purpose, only demanded the advanced guard, consisting of four thousand five hundred men, with eighteen pieces of cannon. Though by no means sanguine of success, Winzingerode

permitted the attempt to be made, throwing on Chernicheff the whole responsibility in case of failure—the usual resource of weak men who have to act with resolute ones. Chernicheff accordingly set out with his small but gallant band, and on the descent of the plateau from the side of Laon towards the valley of the Aisne, fell in with the French advanced guard, two thousand strong, consisting chiefly of National Guards, which was speedily put to the rout and driven down the slope across the meadows into Soissons, with the loss of five hundred men. The Russians advanced, after this success, to within cannon-shot of the place, but purposely delayed the attack till next day, in order to throw the enemy off their guard, by leading them to suppose that there were nothing but Cossacks and light troops, incapable of attempting an assault, before the place. Early on the following morning, preparations for storming were made, and Chernicheff resolved to direct his principal attack against the *tête-du-pont*, and from thence force his way into the town. The infantry was directed to advance by the highway from Laon, while a detachment of light troops was despatched to take possession of a public-house, about ninety yards from the walls, to the right of the great road; and the Cossack regiments, each preceded by six pieces of artillery, advanced in a semicircle towards the walls, so as to distract the enemy as to the real point where an attack was to be made.¹

These dispositions, executed with remarkable precision, proved entirely successful. The light infantry speedily made themselves masters of the public-house, and from its roof and windows kept up such a fire on the bridge head, that it was abandoned, and the columns of infantry, advancing rapidly in pursuit, attempted to carry the gate, but were repulsed with loss. While re-forming his men for a second assault, signs of sudden disorder were observed on the rampart; and the Russians, though as yet ignorant of the cause, immediately took advantage of it to bring two petards up to the gates, which blew them partially off their hinges, and the light infantry, quickly running up, completed their destruction. The whole body of the assailants then rushed in, and pushed on with such vigour, that very little further resistance was attempted;

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Feb. 12.

Feb. 13.
1 Koch. i.
277. Vaud.
ii. 24, 26.
Dan. 127,
128. Rich-
ter, iii. 179.
Die Grosse
Chron.
Plottho, iii.
203.

92.

It is carried
by Cherni-
cheff by a
*coup-de-
main*.

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¹ Dan. 127,
129. Koch, i.
277, 278.
Lab. ii. 208,
209. Vaud.
ii. 24, 27.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
281, 284.

three battalions succeeded in making their escape by the gates, on the opposite side towards Compeigne, which were not invested ; but fourteen guns and three thousand six hundred men fell into the hands of the victors. The confusion on the rampart had been occasioned by the death of General Rusca, who was killed by a cannon-ball while bravely encouraging his men ; and with him all presence of mind on the part of the garrison seemed to have been extinguished.¹

93.
Which is
evacuated by
the Russians,
and reoc-
cupied by the
French.

The capture of this important strategetical point, which Napoleon regarded of such value that he had commenced the tracing out of a great intrenched camp, capable of containing his whole army, in its vicinity, was a severe blow to him, and would have been immediately attended by the most important consequences, were it not for the succession of disasters which at this very time were befalling the army of Silesia, which rendered it extremely hazardous for the Russian general to pursue his success any further on the road from Laon to Paris. The capture of Soissons made Chernicheff acquainted with these important events ; and, at the same time, Winzingerode received orders from Blucher to march to Rheims, in order to be at hand to form a reserve for his forces, so grievously weakened by the bloody campaign of the last three weeks. Chernicheff therefore wisely concluded, that to retain Soissons would be to expose its garrison to certain destruction from the victorious French armies, now at no great distance ; and, at the same time, weaken his detachment to such a degree as to endanger the whole. He therefore, though with bitter regret, abandoned his brilliant conquest the very day he had made it, and marched in the direction of Rheims, where he joined Winzingerode. Meanwhile a detachment of Mortier's troops reoccupied Soissons, which was again put in a posture of defence ; and Sacken, York, and Langeron joined Blucher at Chalons, where the veteran marshal was indefatigably engaged in reorganising and concentrating his army. With such success were his efforts attended, and such was the magnitude of the resources still at his disposal, that by the 18th February he had collected forty-five thousand infantry and fourteen thousand cavalry, with which he was ready to renew active operations.²

² Dan. 128,
130. Koch,
i. 275, 277.
Lab. ii. 208,
209. Vaud. i.
399, 400.
Richter, iii.
179, 180.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
283, 284.

Napoleon, on the second day after the conflict of Monttereau, put his army in motion, and ascended the course of the Seine to Bray and Nogent. Every where the Allied columns retired before him. At the latter town he found the most deplorable traces of the ravages of war, and decisive marks of the desperate stand which Bourmont, with his devoted rearguard, had made ten days before against the attacks of the Allies. The walls were pierced with cannon-balls: many streets were in ruins: every where the traces of conflagration and destruction were to be seen. In the midst of these disasters, the Sisters of Charity had remained at their post, tending, with heroic devotion, in the public hospital, the wounded and suffering alike among their friends and their enemies. During this day's march good order was preserved in the Allied columns, and the artillery and chariots, favoured by a clear bright frost, which made the fields every where passable, even for the heaviest carriages, were all brought off in safety. But on the succeeding days, the usual symptom of disorder and confusion appeared among the retreating host. The converging of so many different columns and such a multitude of carriages towards one highway, necessarily produced great difficulty; and the Allied troops, long accustomed to victory, loudly murmured at a retreat before a force little more than half of their own. The resolution, however, of the Allied sovereigns to concentrate their forces, and accept battle in front of Troyes, had been definitely taken; Blucher was already in full march across from the banks of the Marne to the valley of the Seine to join them; the retreat was continued on the 21st towards Troyes, and on the evening of that day a hundred and forty thousand men were assembled between Mery, Arcis-sur-Aube, and Sommesous, covering all the approaches to Troyes. Such was the vigour with which Blucher reorganized his beaten army, that he appeared at the rendezvous at Mery with fifty thousand men and three hundred pieces of cannon.¹

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94.

Concentration of the Allied armies in front of Troyes.

Feb. 20.

Feb. 21.

¹ Burgh. 148,
149. Fain,
116, 117.
Dan. 157,
161, 162.
Koch. i. 330,
333.

Napoleon made no attempt to prevent the junction of the grand Allied and Silesian armies. He remained several days at Nogent, employed in making a new distribution of his troops; and in sending orders to Augereau at Lyons, by whom he hoped the decisive blow against

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95.

Napoleon
offers battle
to Schwartz-
enberg, who
declines it.
Feb. 22.

the rear of Schwartzenberg would be struck. That general, surprised at the inactivity of the French Emperor, made a grand reconnaissance with ten thousand horse on the 22d, which brought on a heavy cannonade, but it led to nothing decisive. After it was over, the French, without being seriously molested, took up their line of battle between Pouy and Les Grez, in sight of the grand army, which stood in front of Troyes, stretching on both sides of the Seine, from Mongeux on the right to Villacerf on the left. A great battle was expected on both sides, and each made preparations to receive it. But the spirit of the two hosts was widely different. The recent extraordinary success of the French had restored all their former confidence to the soldiers: their trust in the star of the Emperor had returned; and, though well aware of the numerical superiority of their opponents, they had witnessed the confusion and precipitance of their retreat, and felt assured of victory. On the other hand, the Allies were depressed by the little fruit which they had derived from so many successes: they were mortified at the defeats they had recently sustained from an army not half their number, and felt no confidence in the ability or firmness of the Austrian commander-in-chief, at the head of so multifarious an array, to withstand the sudden and weighty strokes of Napoleon.¹

96.
Desponding
views which
prevailed in
the Allied
armies, and
their retreat.

Above all, despondency and vacillation had taken possession of the generals at headquarters. They were dismayed at the prospect of a long retreat to the Rhine through a hostile population; and the Austrian officers, in particular, felt all their wonted apprehensions at the army of Augereau, which report had magnified to forty thousand men, falling on their long line of communication towards the Jura. "The Grand Army," said they, "has lost half its numbers by the sword, disease, and wet weather; the country we are now in is ruined; the sources of our supplies are dried up; and all around us, the inhabitants are ready to raise the standard of insurrection. The loss of a battle, in such circumstances, would draw after it a retreat to the Rhine; where, in all probability, we should be met by the corps of Marshal Augereau, who has forty thousand men under his command. It has become indispensable to secure a retreat to Germany, and wait for rein-

¹ Burgh. 148,
149. Dan.
161, 162.
Koch, i. 330.
332. Plotho,
iii. 232, 233.

forcements from thence, as well as to arrest the progress of the enemy in the south, before we think of resuming offensive operations." In the council of war held at Troyes on the 23d, these opinions prevailed with the majority, as is invariably the case where a serious decision is devolved upon a body, the *smallness* of whose numbers throws upon each individual a sense of responsibility, without the credit of decision. The bolder counsels of the Emperor Alexander, who strongly urged that they should resume the offensive, and fight a great battle, were overruled. The retreat was accordingly continued all night through Troyes, which was abandoned next day; and, as confusion and disorder soon spread to an alarming extent in the retiring columns, it was deemed advisable to offer Napoleon an armistice, for which purpose Prince Wentzel Lichtenstein, one of Schwartzenberg's officers, was despatched to his headquarters.¹

Napoleon received the aide-de-camp in the hamlet of Chatres, where he had passed the night. He brought, along with the proposal for an armistice, an answer from the Emperor Francis to the private letter which Napoleon had written to him six days before from Nangis—a sure proof that the separate interests of Austria were beginning to disjoint the alliance. This letter contained the most conciliatory expressions; admitted that the plans of the Allies had been seriously deranged; and concluded with stating, that in the rapidity and force of his strokes, the Emperor recognised the former great character of his son-in-law. As usual with him, on such occasions, Napoleon entered into a long and confidential conversation with Prince Lichtenstein; and after it had continued a considerable time, asked him, whether the reports were well founded which were in circulation, as to the intention of the Allied sovereigns to dethrone him, and replace the Bourbon family on the throne of France. Prince Lichtenstein warmly repudiated the idea, and assured the Emperor that the reports were altogether destitute of foundation.² Napoleon, however, professed himself by no means satisfied with these explanations, and protested that the presence of the Duc de Berri in Jersey, of the Duc d'Angoulême at Wellington's headquarters, and, above all, of the Comte d'Artois in Switzerland, in the

CHAP.
LXXXV.

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Feb. 23.

¹ Dan. 162,
165. Burgh.
148, 150.
Fain, 117,
119. Die
Grosse
Chron. ii.
427, 429.
Ploto, iii.
231.

97.

Armistice of
Lusigny.
Feb. 24.

² Fain, 122,
123. Burgh.
151. Dan.
166, 167.
Ploto, iii.
232.

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LXXXV.

1814.

98.
Its conditions
and line of
demarcation
between the
two armies.

rear of the grand army, were little calculated to allay his apprehensions on this head.

Towards evening the officer was sent back with a haughty letter from Berthier to Schwartzenberg, in which he stated that "the assurances given to your Highness of its being the wish of Austria to bring about a general pacification, had induced the Emperor to accede to the proposal." The plenipotentiaries appointed to conclude the armistice, were Count Shuvaloff on the part of Russia, Duca on that of Austria, and Rauch for Prussia; and Lusigny was the place fixed on for the conference. The principal conditions were, that the passes of the Vosges mountains were to remain in the hands of the Allies; and that the line of demarcation between the two armies was to be the line of the Marne, as far as Chalons, for the grand army, and thence along the course of the Vele till it joins the Aisne, for that of Silesia. But so confident was Napoleon in the returning good fortune of his arms, that, contrary to the wishes of the Austrians, he would

¹ Plotho, iii.
223. Dan.
166, 167.
Fain, 122,
123. Burgh.
155, 157.
Die Grosse
Chron. ii.
430, 431.

not consent to a suspension of hostilities while the conferences for an armistice were going on: and Alexander, who was strongly averse to the armistice, took advantage of this circumstance to direct Winzingerode to pay no attention to any intimation he might receive of a suspension of hostilities, till he received a special order from the Emperor himself.¹

99.
Remon-
strance of
Blucher
against this
resolution
to retreat.

It was not without the most vigorous remonstrances on the part both of Blucher and Alexander, that this perilous resolution to retreat was at this period taken by the Allied council. On being informed of the intention of the Austrian generalissimo to retreat from before Troyes, the old marshal became literally furious; openly charged him with bribery and treachery; and declared he would on no account retreat with him, but would separate and march direct on Paris, in order to compel Napoleon to give up the pursuit of the grand army, and turn his forces against that of Silesia. Alexander, on being informed of these intentions, approved of them, but directed the field-marshal previously to give the details of his plan. Blucher immediately, with his own hand, wrote out on a torn sheet of paper the following note:—
"1. The retreat of the grand army will cause the whole

French nation to take up arms; and the French who have declared for the good cause will suffer. 2. Our victorious armies will lose heart. 3. We shall retreat into a country where there are no supplies; and where the inhabitants, being forced to give up their last morsel, will be reduced to despair. 4. The Emperor of the French will recover from the consternation into which he has been thrown by our successes, and will, as before, win back the confidence of the nation. Most heartily do I thank your majesty for the permission you have given me to resume the offensive. I flatter myself with the hopes of success, if your majesty will give positive orders to Generals Winzingerode and Bulow to place themselves under my command. Joined by them, I shall march on Paris, fearing neither Napoleon nor his marshals, if they should come to meet me."¹

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LXXXV.
1814.

¹ Dan. 171,
172.

A lamentable catastrophe attended the return of good fortune to the cause of Napoleon, and stained if it did not disgrace his arms. On the evening of the 23d, the French advanced posts appeared before the gates of Troyes, and notwithstanding the sort of truce which existed, some skirmishing took place between the videttes on either side. During the night, however, the town was entirely evacuated by the Allied troops, and at daybreak on the following morning Napoleon entered it, without opposition, in the midst of his Guards. The middle and poorer classes, who were unanimous in favour of his government, received the Emperor with unbounded enthusiasm, although the higher classes, who were for the most part attached to the exiled dynasty, kept aloof. As he passed through the streets crowds surrounded him, striving to kiss his hand or touch his horse, and with loud acclamations saluted him as the saviour of his country. The first thing he did was to order the arrest of the Marquis de Widranges and M. Goualt. The former had set out some time before for Bâle, and so escaped; but the latter, in spite of all the entreaties of his friends, had persisted in remaining in Troyes, being unwilling to leave his wife, who could not be moved, and to whom he was tenderly attached. He was immediately arrested, brought before a military commission, and condemned to death. M. Duchatel, with whom the Emperor was lodged, threw himself at his feet, and, with M. Goualt's family, implored

100.
Reoccupation
of Troyes by
Napoleon,
and execution
of M. Goualt.

CHAP.
LXXXV.

1814.

¹ Fain, 129,
131. Lab. ii.
247, 249.
Beauch. ii.
23, 25.

pardon, reminding him how much a deed of clemency would add to the lustre of his victory. But the Emperor, though often inclined to mercy when the first fit of passion was over, on this occasion was inexorable, and the unfortunate nobleman was left to his fate. At eleven at night he was led out, by torchlight, surrounded by gendarmes, to the place appointed for public executions; on his back and his breast was affixed a placard, with the words, written in large characters, "Traitor to his country;" and he died with heroic firmness, without permitting his eyes to be bandaged, and protesting with his last breath his devotion to his king and country.¹

101.
General re-
sult of these
successes on
the part of
Napoleon.

Napoleon had now performed the most extraordinary and brilliant military achievements in his long and eventful career. Recovering his army, by the force of his resolution and the energy of his character, from the lowest point of depression, he had at once arrested the course of disaster, after an apparently decisive defeat, and struck the most terrible blows against his adversaries. Suddenly stopping his retreat, crossing the country, and falling perpendicularly on the line of march of the army of Silesia, he had surprised the Prussian marshal in a straggling and unguarded situation, where his scattered corps fell an easy prey to the superior force which was directed against them. At Champaubert, Montmirail, and Vauchamps, he had inflicted a loss of full twenty thousand men on that iron band of veterans, without being weakened on his own side by more than a fourth part of the number; while at Nangis and Montreau he had stopped the advance of the grand army, inflicted on them a loss of fully twelve thousand men, and thrown back their victorious standards across the Seine. Such was the terror produced by his arms, that irresolution and circumspection had succeeded to boldness and decision in the Allied councils. The intrepid advice of Alexander and Blucher was disregarded; and a hundred and forty thousand of the bravest troops in Europe abandoned the capital of Champagne, retreated ignominiously before sixty thousand, and concluded by soliciting an armistice from them. When it is recollected that these marvellous results were gained by a force which never could bring above seventy thousand sabres and bayonets into the field, against a host of more than double that

number, composed of the veteran soldiers who had saved Russia and delivered Germany, and that though thus inferior upon the whole, he was always superior at the point of attack, it must be admitted that a more brilliant series of military movements is not recorded in history; and that if none other existed to signalise his capacity, they alone would be sufficient to render the name of Napoleon immortal. To say that they were in the end unsuccessful is no impeachment of their merit; if they did not achieve success they deserved it.

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“ Ne crains point de succès qui souille ta mémoire,
Le bon et le mauvais sont égaux pour ta gloire:
Et dans un tel dessein le manque de bonheur
Met en péril ta vie et non pas ton honneur.” *

It must at the same time be observed, that the genius of the French Emperor was seconded to the utmost by the opposite and contradictory qualities of the two commanders-in-chief of the Allied armies. Blucher, daring, impetuous, and confident, was hastening on to Paris, with his columns so far dissevered, and so incapable of supporting each other in case of danger, that they seemed at once to invite a flank attack, and defy mutual co-operation; while Schwartzberg, slow, methodical, and circumspect, was alike disqualified to lend him any assistance in case of need, or relieve him from the pressure of the enemy by the vigour of his own operations. Thus the former was as likely to run headlong into hazard as the latter was, by never daring, never to win. The extreme anxiety of the one for a vigorous advance, exposed him as much to danger, as the strong disposition of the other for the favourite Austrian manœuvre of a retreat, disabled him from obviating it. The great merit of the French Emperor,—and, situated as he was, it was of the very highest kind,—consisted in his clear appreciation of the opposite qualities of these two commanders; in the genius which made him perceive, that the hardihood of the one would expose him to perils, while the circumspection of the other would admit of his being almost entirely neglected; and in the moral courage which, refusing to be subdued even by the most serious disasters, saw in them only the germ of false confidence to his antagonists, and the opportunity of recalling victory to the imperial standards for himself.

102.
Errors of the
Allied generals.

* CORNEILLE, *Cinna*, Act i. Scene 3.

CHAPTER LXXXVI.

CAMPAIGN OF 1814 FROM THE ARMISTICE OF LUSIGNY
TO THE BATTLE OF LAON.CHAP.
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1814.

1.

Council at
Bar-sur-
Aube.

MATTERS had now arrived at that point, from the moral effect of these successes on the councils of the majority of the Allies, that the success of the invasion of France, and with it the holding together of the grand alliance, hung by a thread. The influence of Alexander, great as it was, and strenuously as it had been exerted on the side of vigorous measures, was unable singly to stem the torrent of despondency, or retain the Allied army in that intrepid course, from which alone ultimate salvation to the cause of Europe could be hoped. At this crisis, however, he received the most vigorous co-operation from the moral courage of LORD CASTLEREAGH; and it was to the combined firmness of these two great men that the triumph of the alliance is beyond all question to be ascribed. On the 25th February the Allied sovereigns assembled at the house of General Kneesebeck, at Bar-sur-Aube, as from illness he was unable to leave his apartment, or to attend the council elsewhere. Besides the sovereigns, the following persons were present, Prince Volkonsky, Baron Diebitch, Count Nesselrode, Princes Schwartzemberg and Metternich, Count Radetsky, Lord Castlereagh, and Prince Hardenberg. At this council Alexander strongly supported, as he had always done, the policy of vigorous operations, and openly announced that he would authorise Blucher to recommence the offensive, notwithstanding the armistice of Lusigny, which did not extend beyond the grand army, if he could be reinforced by the corps of Bulow and Winzingerode,¹ the former of which

¹ Dan. 173.
Lord Ripon
to Lord Londonderry.
July 6, 1839.

was still in Flanders, though on the French frontier, while the latter was in the neighbourhood of Laon.

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But here a very great, and what appeared to the majority of the council an insurmountable difficulty, presented itself. These corps belonged to the army of Bernadotte, and took their orders only from him; that prince had not yet passed Liege: a long and tedious negotiation appeared unavoidable before he could be brought to consent to such a dislocation of the troops hitherto under his direct command; his evident and well-known backwardness at co-operating in the invasion of France, rendered it certain that he would do every thing in his power to prevent the transference of the largest and most efficient part of his army to so inveterate an enemy of his native country as Marshal Blucher; while at the same time the precarious situation of the alliance, and the evident hesitation of Austria, rendered it a matter of extreme hazard to take any steps which might afford him a pretext for breaking off from it. Yet a decision required to be come to without an instant's delay; for Napoleon had not consented to any suspension of military operations during the conferences.¹

2.
Serious difficulty arising from the corps of Bernadotte not being subject to the orders of the council.

¹ Earl of Ripon to Lord Londonderry, July 6, 1839. Dan. 173.

Alexander strongly urged the expedience of withdrawing the corps of Winzingerode, Bulow, and Woronzoff, from Bernadotte's command; but he concurred with Schwartzemberg in holding, that this was *impossible* without his previous consent, and the majority of the council inclined to this opinion. Upon this Lord Castlereagh inquired of the most experienced officers present, whether, in a military point of view, this change was indispensable to the success of the proposed operation. They answered that it was. Upon this he immediately stated that, in that case, the plan must be adopted, and the necessary orders given immediately; that England had a right to expect that her allies would not be deterred from a decisive course by any such difficulties as had been urged; that, if necessary, he would withhold the monthly subsidies from the Crown-prince till he consented to the arrangement; and that he took upon himself the whole responsibility of any consequences that might arise, so far as regarded that prince. Such was the weight of England at that period in the alliance, as the universal paymaster,

3.
Decisive effect of Lord Castlereagh's interposition.

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¹ Earl of
Ripon to
Lord London-
derry, July
6, 1839.
Dan. 173.
Schwartz-
berg's Gene-
ral Orders,
Feb. 26,
1814, given
in Burgh.
169, 171.

as well as the deserved influence of her representative, from his personal character; and such the effect of this manly course, adopted at the decisive moment, that it prevailed with the assembly. The requisite orders were given that very day that "the grand army should retreat to Langres, and there, uniting with the Austrian reserves, accept battle; and that the army of Silesia should forthwith march to the Marne, where it was to be joined by the corps of Winzingerode, Bulow, and Woronzoff, and immediately advance to Paris." It is not going too far to assert, that to this resolution, and the moral courage of the minister who brought it about, the downfall of Napoleon is immediately to be ascribed.^{1*}

It was not, however, without the utmost difficulty that this decisive resolution was adopted by the Allied sovereigns. The majority of the council maintained that it would be most advantageous for both armies to retreat. Alexander decidedly opposed this opinion; adding that,

* As this is a point of the highest importance, the following extract from a very interesting letter from the Earl of Ripon, who was confidentially engaged with Lord Castlereagh at that period, to the brother of the latter, the present Marquis of Londonderry, is subjoined:—"From Napoleon's central position, between the armies of Blucher and Schwartzberg, he was enabled to fall, with his main strength, upon each of them singly; and experience had proved that neither of them was separately adequate to withstand his concentrated efforts. Blucher's army was much inferior in number to Schwartzberg's, and the thing to be done, therefore, was to reinforce Blucher to such an extent as might insure the success of his movements. But where were these reinforcements to be found? There was nothing immediately at hand but a body of Russians under St Priest, who were on their march to Rheims, to join the corps to which they belonged in Blucher's army; and they were manifestly insufficient for the purpose. But there were two other strong corps, one of Prussians under General Bulow, and one of Russians under Winzingerode, who were on their march into France from Flanders, and might be brought forward with decisive effect. They belonged, however, to the army of the Crown-prince of Sweden, who had not at that period, I think, crossed the Rhine; they were under his orders, and he was very tenacious of his authority over them; and when it was suggested that the only mode of adequately reinforcing Blucher was by placing these corps at his disposal without a moment's delay, the difficulty of withdrawing them from Bernadotte's command, without a previous and probably tedious discussion with him, was represented by a great authority as *insurmountable*. Lord Castlereagh was present when this matter was discussed at the council; and the moment he understood that, militarily speaking, the proposed plan was indispensable to success, he took his line. He stated, that in that case the plan *must* be adopted, and the necessary orders *immediately* given; that England had a right to expect that her allies would not be deterred from a decisive course by any such difficulties as had been urged, and he boldly took upon himself the *whole responsibility* of any consequences that might arise, as far as regarded the Crown-prince of Sweden. His advice prevailed: the battle of Laon was fought successfully, and no further efforts of Buonaparte could oppose the march of the Allies to Paris, and their triumphant occupation of that city. It is not, then, too much to say, that the vigour and energy displayed by Lord Castlereagh at this crisis, decided the fate of the campaign."—LORD RIPON TO MARQUIS LONDONDERRY, July 6, 1839, given in an Appendix to the Marquis's Letter to Lord Brougham in answer to his Strictures on Lord Castlereagh, pp. 57, 58.

rather than do so, he would separate from the grand army, with the guards, grenadiers, and Wittgenstein's corps, and march with Blucher on Paris. "I hope," added he, turning to the King of Prussia, "that your majesty, like a faithful ally, of whose friendship I have had so many proofs, will not refuse to accompany me." "I will do so with pleasure," answered that brave prince; "I have long ago placed my troops at your majesty's disposal." "But why should you leave me behind you?" added the Emperor Francis. But these protestations of the Allied sovereigns, how honourable soever to themselves, determined nothing: the necessity of the grand army retreating was resolutely maintained; the separation of Wittgenstein and the Russians would have sent it headlong across the Jura, and probably dissolved the alliance.¹

It was Lord Castlereagh's interposition, by providing the means of adequately reinforcing Blucher *without weakening or dislocating the grand army*, which really determined the campaign; and so satisfied was Alexander of this, that the moment the plan was agreed to, he wrote a note to Blucher with his own hand, in pencil, informing him that the corps of Winzingerode and Bulow were now placed under his orders, and authorising him to act according to his discretion, on the sole condition of observing certain rules of military prudence. At the same council it was determined to form, out of the German and Austrian reserves which were about to cross the Jura, combined with the corps of Bianchi, a fresh army, to be called the army of the south, fifty thousand strong, which was to be placed under the direction of Prince Hesse-Hoimburg, and was to march on Macon, drive back Augereau, and secure the flank and rear of the grand army from insult: while Bernadotte and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar were to remain in the Low Countries, and complete the reduction of Antwerp, and a few other strong places which held out for the Emperor in Flanders.²

No sooner had this council broken up, than messengers were despatched in all directions with the orders which had been agreed on at this memorable conference. The two armies, so recently united, again separated: the huge masses of the grand army slowly retired towards Langres; and Blucher, overjoyed at being liberated from the

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4.
Plan of the
campaign
agreed to at
Bar-sur-
Aube.

¹ Koch. i.
348. Dan.
174, 175.

5.
Great diffi-
culty with
which it was
effected, and
its immediate
execution by
Alexander.

² Dan. 174,
175. Koch. i.
348, 349.

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6.

Separation of
the grand
army and
the army of
Silesia.
Feb. 26.

Feb. 27.

paralysing authority of Schwartzberg, resumed his way towards Chalons and the Marne, followed by the great body of the French army, the corps of Oudinot and Macdonald alone being despatched on the traces of the grand army. As soon as Blucher perceived that the weight of Napoleon's force was directed against him, he despatched a messenger to inform Schwartzberg of the fact; the retrograde movement of the grand army, the leading columns of which had passed Chaumont, and were rapidly approaching Langres, was stopped; and preparations were made for again resuming the offensive, in order to relieve the army of Silesia from the dangers which threatened it. Meanwhile that gallant host, unwearied in combat, and burning with desire to retrieve the defeats it had lately received, rapidly descended both banks of the Marne. Marmont, obliged to evacuate Sezanne, was driven by La Ferté-Gaucher on La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, whither Mortier also had retired before the advancing corps of Winzingerode. Already the fugitives were appearing at Meaux: Paris was in consternation; and Napoleon, alarmed at the danger of the capital, set out suddenly from Troyes on the morning of the 27th, with his Guards and cuirassiers, to accumulate his forces against his weakened but unconquerable antagonist.¹

¹ Fain, 138,
139. Koch. i.
350, 357.
Dan. 176,
178.

7.

Opening of
the Congress
of Chatillon.
Feb. 4.

While these military movements, every one of which seemed to involve the fate of Europe, were in progress, negotiations of the most important kind were going on between the Allied powers and the French Emperor; and a new treaty among the former had been entered into, which again cemented and placed on a secure basis their recently somewhat disjointed alliance. It has been already mentioned that, in answer to the Allied declaration from Frankfort, and the proposals for an accommodation, of which M. de St Aignan was the bearer, Napoleon had signified his readiness to treat; and after some delays on both sides, CHATILLON was fixed on as the place for the conferences, which was declared neutral ground, and the congress opened there on the 4th February. The great influence of England at this period in the alliance, might be seen from the number of plenipotentiaries assigned to her in this memorable assembly: they were, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Cathcart, and Sir Charles

Stewart,* on the part of Great Britain; Count Razumoffski on that of Russia; Count Stadion for Austria; and Baron Humboldt on behalf of Prussia. Caulaincourt singly sustained the onerous duty of upholding, against such an array of talent and energy, the declining fortunes of Napoleon.¹

But though both parties professed an anxious desire to come to an accommodation, yet their views were so various that it was not difficult to foresee that, as in the preceding year at Prague, the congress would be little more than a form, and the sword must in reality determine the points in dispute between them. Both proceeded on the principle of making the terms which they demanded dependent on the aspect of military affairs; and both, in consequence, readily agreed to the congress continuing its labours amid the din of the surrounding conflict. Alexander from the outset upheld this principle, and strenuously maintained that the terms proposed at Frankfurt should not be adhered to, after the great successes of the campaign, and the conquest of a third of France by the Allied forces, had opened to them new prospects, which they could not have entertained before they crossed the Rhine. Napoleon, during the first alarm consequent on the battle of La Rothière, had given Caulaincourt full powers to sign any thing which might prevent the occupation of Paris by the victorious Allies; but no sooner had victory returned to his standards at Montmirail and Champaubert, than he retracted, as already noticed, these concessions, enjoined his plenipotentiary to strive for delay, as his prospects were daily brightening, and directed him, above every thing, to "sign nothing without his special authority."²

The vast importance of the congress which was about to open, had early impressed upon both the Continental and British cabinets the necessity of sending a minister to take the principal direction of the negotiations, who might wield unfettered the whole powers of the government. General Pozzo di Borgo was accordingly sent to London in the close of 1813 to propose this; and the British government at once acquiesced in the propriety of the plan. Lord

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¹ Dan. 2, 14.
Lond. 276.

8.

Views of the
contending
parties at
this period.

² Dan. 2, 14,
82. Lond.
276. Fain,
93, 94.

9.

The British
government
send Lord
Castlereagh
as their plenipotentiary.

* Now Marquis of Londonderry.

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¹ Lond. 273,
274. Cap. x.
365, 366.
Burgh.
161, 164.

Harrowby was at first talked of; but the risks of delay in his case, from the necessity of corresponding with the foreign office in London, were such, that it was deemed indispensable to send the minister for foreign affairs himself. No one could have been found in any rank better qualified than Lord Castlereagh for the task. His high-bred manners, conciliatory disposition, and suavity of temper, were as much fitted to give him influence in the Allied cabinets, as his clearness of intellectual vision, firmness of character, and indomitable moral courage, were calculated to add vigour and resolution to their councils. He received his instructions as to the terms to which he was to agree from a cabinet council, before leaving the British shores.¹

10.
Views of
Great Britain
in this nego-
tiation.

England had no demands either to recede from or augment since the war commenced. Her object throughout had been, not to force an unpopular dynasty on an unwilling people; not to wrest provinces or cities from France, in return for those which she had so liberally exacted from all the adjoining states; not even to make her indemnify Great Britain for any part of the enormous expenses to which she had been put during the war: but simply to provide *security for the future*; to establish a barrier alike against the revolutionary propagandism and military violence of her people; to compel her rulers and armies, whether republican or imperial, to withdraw within their own territories, and neither seek to disturb foreign nations by their principles, nor subdue them by their power. For the attainment of these objects, she had uniformly maintained that no security was so desirable, because none was so likely to be effectual, as the restoration of the former line of princes, with whom repose was practicable, and to whom "conquest" was not, according to Napoleon's maxim, "essential to existence." But she had never regarded that as an indispensable preliminary to an accommodation, nor even put it forward on any occasion, from first to last, as the basis of a treaty with the existing rulers of France. In a word, England had nothing to do but to revert to and enforce those principles which she had submitted to the cabinet of St Petersburg before the

contest began,* which she had announced to Napoleon when first seated, flushed with the triumph of Marengo, on the consular throne;† and which had formed the basis of the grand alliance projected by Mr Pitt in 1805, shortly before the dreadful catastrophe of the Austerlitz campaign.‡ She did so, accordingly; she demanded neither more nor less.

So memorable an instance of constancy in adverse, and moderation in prosperous fortune, does not occur in the whole annals of mankind. We admire the magnanimity of the Romans, who refused to treat with Hannibal, when encamped within sight of the capitol, till he had first

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* "The terms offered to France should be, the withdrawing her arms within the limits of the French territory, the abandoning her conquests, the rescinding any acts injurious to the sovereignty or rights of any other nation, and the giving, in some unequivocal manner, a pledge of her intention no longer to foment troubles, or excite disturbances against foreign governments. In return for these stipulations, the different powers of Europe, who should be parties to this measure, might engage to abandon all measures or views of hostility against France, or interference in her internal affairs, and to maintain a correspondence and intercourse of amity with the existing powers of that country, with whom such a treaty may be concluded."—LORD GRENVILLE, *Minister of Foreign Affairs, to the British Ambassador at St Petersburg, 29th Dec. 1792; Ante, Chap. xlii. § 16.*

† "The best and most natural pledge of the abandonment by France of those gigantic schemes of ambition, by which the very existence of society in the adjoining states has so long been menaced, would be the restoration of that line of princes, which for so many centuries maintained the French nation in prosperity at home, and consideration and respect abroad. Such an event would alone have removed, and will at any time remove, all obstacles in the way of negotiation or peace. It would confirm to France the unmolested enjoyment of its ancient territory: and it would give to all the other nations of Europe, in tranquillity and peace, *that security* which they are now compelled to seek by other means. But, desirable as such an event must be, both to France and the world, it is not to this mode exclusively that his majesty limits the possibility of secure and solid pacification. His majesty makes no claims to prescribe to France what should be the form of her government, or in whose hands she shall vest the authority necessary for conducting the affairs of a great and powerful nation. He looks only to the security of his own dominions and those of his Allies, and to the general safety of Europe. Whenever he shall judge that such security can in any manner be attained, as resulting either from the position of the country from whose internal situation the danger has arisen, or from such other circumstances, of whatever nature, as may produce the same end, his majesty will eagerly embrace the opportunity to concert with his Allies the means of a general pacification."—LORD GRENVILLE to M. TALLEYRAND, *January 5, 1800; Parl. History, xxxiv. 1199, 1201; and Ante, Chap. xxx. § 136.*

‡ "The views of his Britannic Majesty and of the Emperor of Russia, in bringing about this alliance, are pure and disinterested. Their chief object, in regard to the countries which may be conquered from France, is to establish as much as possible their *ancient rights*, and to secure the well-being of their inhabitants; but in pursuing that object they must not lose sight of the general security of Europe, on which indeed that well-being is mainly dependent." Then follows a specification of the disposal to be made of the *conquests* of France, in the event of the alliance succeeding in wresting them from that power; without a syllable either as to despoiling her of any of the ancient provinces of the monarchy, or of interfering in the remotest degree with its internal government.—MR PITT'S *note to the EMPEROR OF RUSSIA, January 11, 1805; SCHOELL, Histoire des Traités de Paix, vii. 59; and Ante, Chap. xxxix. § 49.*

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11.
Their extraordinary
magnanimity,
and united
steadiness
and moderation
of her
conduct.

evacuated the territories of the republic; we pay a just tribute to the heroism of Alexander, who surrendered the ancient capital of his empire to the flames, rather than permit it to be sullied by the presence of the spoiler; we acknowledge the glory which is shed over Spain, by the undaunted resolution of her Cortes never to negotiate with Napoleon, even when the remnant of her armies was shut up within the walls of Cadiz. But these were instances of constancy in adverse, not of moderation in prosperous fortune. To have maintained for twenty years a contest, often unaided, with an enemy possessing more than double her own resources; to have neither advanced beyond nor receded from her principles during that long period; to have put forward no pretensions in victory which she had not maintained in defeat; to have concluded peace with her inveterate enemy when her capital was in her power, and her Emperor dethroned, and exacted no conditions from the vanquished on which she had not offered to maintain peace before the contest commenced*—this is the glory of England, and of England alone.

12.
Instructions
to Lord Castlereagh
from the English
Cabinet.

Conformably to these principles, the instructions of Lord Castlereagh from the British cabinet contained no projects for the partition of any part of France as that monarchy existed in 1789, prior to the commencement of the Revolution, but the most ample provision for the establishment of barriers against its future irruption into Europe. The reduction of France to its ancient limits; the formation of a federative union in Germany, which might secure to the meanest of its states the protection of the whole; the re-establishment of the Swiss confederacy under the guarantee of the great powers; the restoration of the lesser states of Italy, intermediate between France and Austria, to a state of independence; the restoration of Spain and Portugal under their ancient sovereigns, and

* "England will never consent that France should arrogate to herself the power of annulling at pleasure, under cover of a pretended natural right, of which she makes herself the sole judge, the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers. She will never see with indifference France make herself, either directly or indirectly, sovereign of the Low Countries, or general arbitress of Europe. If France is really desirous of maintaining peace and friendship with England, let her renounce her views of aggression and aggrandisement, and confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other governments, disturbing their tranquillity, or violating their rights."—LORD GRENVILLE to M. CHAUVELIN, the French envoy, Feb. 5, 1793; *State Papers*, No. 1; *Ann. Reg.*; and *Ante*, ii. Chap. ix. § 121.

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in their former extent; and lastly, the restitution of Holland to separate sovereignty, under the family of the Stadtholders, with such an addition of territory as might give it the means of maintaining that blessing,—such were the instructions of the English cabinet, in regard to the general restoration of the balance of power in Europe, in so far as France was concerned; and in these propositions all the Allied powers concurred. With a view, however, to the especial security of England, two additional provisions were insisted upon, regarding which the British cabinet was inflexible. The first of these was, that no discussion even, derogatory to the British maritime rights, as settled by existing treaties, or the general maritime law of Europe, should be admitted; the second, that in the event of any new arrangements being deemed advisable for the future frontiers of France, they should not embrace Antwerp, Genoa, or Piedmont. The first was justly considered essential to the maritime security of England; the second, to the independence of the Italian states, on which side, as no general confederacy was contemplated, the greatest danger might in future be apprehended.¹

¹ Hard. xii.
318, 320.
Cap. x. 366.

In these instructions, however, two important points were purposely left undecided; not because they were overlooked, or their importance not fully appreciated, but because their solution was involved in such difficulty, and was so dependent on future contingencies, that no directions previously given could possibly prove applicable to every case which might arise during the subsequent march of events. These were the restoration of the Bourbons, and the future destiny of Poland.

13.
Restoration
of the Bour-
bons, and
difficulties in
which it was
involved.

On the first of these points, the instructions contained no specific directions, because it was the intention of England, not less than of the other Allied powers, not to interfere with the wishes and intentions of the French people. Lord Castlereagh, indeed, in conformity with the declared purpose of British diplomacy ever since the commencement of the war, made no concealment of his opinion, either in or out of parliament,* that the best

* "Every pacification would be incomplete, if you did not re-establish on the throne of France the ancient family of the Bourbons: any peace with the man who had placed himself at the head of the French nation, could have no other final result but to give to Europe fresh subjects of division and alarms—it could be neither secure nor durable. Nevertheless, it was impossible to refuse to nego-

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¹ Hard. xii.
318, 320.
Cap. x. 367.

security for the peace of Europe would be found in the restoration of the dispossessed race of princes to the French throne; and "the ancient race and the ancient territory" was often referred to by him, in private conversation, as offering the only combination which was likely to give lasting repose to the world. But it was as little his design, as it was that of the British cabinet, to advance these views as a preliminary to any, even the most lasting, accommodation.¹

14.
Views of the
English and
Russian go-
vernments
regarding the
Bourbons.

Such a reaction, to have any likelihood of being durable, and to avoid exciting the immediate jealousy of Austria for the succession of Napoleon's son, could only be founded upon a movement in France itself, and such a manifestation of opinion within its limits, as might render it evident that no chance remained of a continuance of the crown in the Buonaparte family. The views of Alexander were entirely the same at this period, so far as regarded the government of France; and his able diplomatist, General-Pozzo di Borgo, when sent to London to induce the British government to send Lord Castlereagh to the Allied headquarters, thus expressed himself to the Comte d'Artois, who pressed him to explain the ideas of the Czar on the subject of the Bourbon family—"My lord, every thing has its time; let us not perplex matters. To sovereigns you should never present complicated questions. It is with no small difficulty that they have been kept united in the grand object of overthrowing Buonaparte: as soon as that is done, and the imperial rule destroyed, the question of dynasty will present itself; and then your illustrious house will spontaneously occur to the thoughts of all."²

² Cap. x. 367.
Hard. xii.
318, 322.
Private infor-
mation.

15.
Division of
opinion
regarding
Poland.

But though entirely in unison on this momentous subject, the cabinets of England and Russia were far from being equally agreed as to another subject, which, it was foreseen, would speedily present itself for discussion on the overthrow of Napoleon—and that was the future destiny of Poland. That the old anarchical democracy of that country, with its stormy comitia, *liberum veto*, internal

tiate with him, when invested with power, without doing violence to the opinion of Europe, and incurring the whole responsibility of the continuance of the war."—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S *Speech in Parliament*, 29th June 1814; *Parl. Debates*, xxviii. 458.

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feuds, and external weakness, could not be restored, if the slightest regard was felt either for the general balance of power in Europe, or the welfare of that gallant but distracted people themselves, was evident to all. But what to do with Poland, amid the powerful and now victorious monarchies by which it was surrounded, all of whom, it might be foreseen, would be anxious to share its spoils, was not so apparent. In a private conversation with Sir Charles Stewart at this period, the Emperor Alexander openly announced those views, in regard to the annexation of the Grand-duchy of Warsaw to his dominions, which subsequently occasioned such difficulty at the congress of Vienna. He stated that his moral feelings, and every principle of justice and right, called upon him to use his power to restore such a constitution to Poland as would secure the happiness of so noble and great a people; that the abandonment of seven millions of his Lithuanian subjects for the attainment of such an object, if he had no guarantee for the advantage he was thence to derive for Russia, would be more than his imperial crown was worth; and that the only way of reconciling these objects was, by uniting the Lithuanian provinces with the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, under such a constitutional administration as Russia might appoint. He communicated at the same time these views to Prince Metternich. Thus early did the habitual ambition of that great power show itself in the European congress; and so clearly, according to the usual course of human affairs, were future difficulty and embarrassment arising out of the very magnitude of present successes.¹

¹ Lond. 275,
276.

The instructions of Napoleon to his plenipotentiary, Caulaincourt, were of a very different tenor, and such as sufficiently evinced the unlikelihood that the congress would terminate in any permanent accommodation. "It appears doubtful," said he, "whether the Allies really wish a peace; I desire it, but it must be solid and honourable. France, without its natural limits, without Ostend, without Antwerp, would be no longer on a level with the other powers of Europe. England, and all the other Allied powers, have recognised at Frankfort the principle of giving France her natural boundaries. The conquests of France within the Rhine and the Alps can

16.
Napoleon's
instructions
to Caulain-
court.

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never compensate what Austria, Russia, and Prussia have acquired in Finland, in Poland, or what England has seized in India. The policy of England, the hatred of the Emperor of Russia, will carry away Austria. I have accepted the basis announced at Frankfort; but it is probable by this time the Allies have other ideas. Their negotiations are but a mask. The moment that they declared the negotiations subject to the influence of military events, it became impossible to foresee their probable issue. You must hear and observe every thing. You must endeavour to discover the views of the Allies, and make me acquainted with them, day by day, in order that I may be in a situation to give you more precise instructions than I can give at present. To reduce France to its ancient limits is to degrade it. They are deceived if they suppose that the misfortunes of war will make the nation desire such a peace: there is not a French heart which would not feel its disgrace before the end of six months, and which would not make it an eternal subject of opprobrium to the government which should be base enough to sign it. Italy is untouched, the Viceroy has a fine army: in a few days I shall have assembled a force adequate to fight several battles, even before the arrival of the troops from Spain. If the nation second me, the enemy is marching to his ruin; if fortune betrays me, my part is taken: I will not retain the throne. I will neither degrade the nation nor myself, by subscribing debasing conditions. Try and discover what are Metternich's ideas. It is not the interest of Austria to push matters to extremity: yet a step, and the lead will escape her. In this state of affairs, there is nothing to prescribe to you. Confine yourself, in the first instance, to hearing every thing, and inform me of what goes on. I am on the eve of joining the army; we shall be so near that scarcely any delay will occur in making me acquainted with the state of the negotiations."¹

¹ Napoleon to Caulaincourt, Jan. 4, 1814. Cap. x. 369, 370.

When the views of the opposite parties were so widely at variance, it was not likely that the negotiations could lead to any result, or serve as more than a pretext to both parties for regulating the terms insisted on, according to the aspect of military affairs. Yet were the conferences nearer leading to the conclusion of a peace, at their outset,

than could possibly have been anticipated. The congress opened on the 3d of February at Chatillon; and from the great weight of Lord Castlereagh at the Allied headquarters, the utmost union was soon brought to prevail between the leading ministers of the great powers. In the outset, Napoleon, by means of Caulaincourt, endeavoured to open a private communication with Prince Metternich; but the answer of that able statesman damped the hopes he had hitherto so confidently entertained of detaching Austria from the alliance, while, at the same time, it sufficiently proved that the cabinet of Vienna was anxious to retain him on the throne, if it could be done consistently with the liberties and security of the other states in Europe.*¹

Caulaincourt answered in terms dignified and melancholy, lamenting that Prince Metternich, instead of Count Stadion, was not the minister intrusted with the interests of Austria at the congress, to counterbalance the influence which Lord Castlereagh might exercise in its deliberations; and conjuring him, if he would avert the last calamities from the beloved daughter of his Emperor, to exert his efforts to bring about a fair and equitable peace.† Metternich replied: "M. Caulaincourt has conceived

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17.
Commence-
ment of the
Congress.
Jan. 23.

¹ Cap. x. 372.

18.

Secret corre-
spondence
between Met-
ternich and
Caulaincourt.

* "I received yesterday evening the confidential letter of the 23d, which your excellency has addressed to me. I have submitted it to the Emperor my master, and his imperial majesty has resolved to make no use of its contents—it will remain for ever unknown: and I pray your excellency to believe, that in the existing state of matters, any confidence reposed in our cabinet is beyond the reach of any abuse. I have a pleasure in making known to you this assurance, in a moment of such immense importance for Austria, France, and Europe. The conduct of my sovereign has been uniform and consistent. He has engaged in this war without hatred; he pursues it without resentment. The day that he gave his daughter to the prince who then governed Europe, he ceased to behold in him a personal enemy. The fate of war has since changed the attitude of all. If the Emperor Napoleon will listen in these moments to the voice of reason—if he will consent to seek his glory in the happiness of a great people, in renouncing his former ambitious policy—the Emperor will with pleasure revert to the feelings he entertained when he gave him the daughter of his heart; but if a fatal blindness shall render the Emperor Napoleon deaf to the unanimous voice of his people and of Europe, he will deplore the fate of his daughter, but not arrest his course."—*Confidential Letter, METTERNICH TO CAULAINCOURT, 29th Jan. 1814*; given in CAPEFIGUE, *Hist. de l'Empire de Napoleon*, x. 372, 373.

† "The arrival of the Allied troops at Paris would be the commencement of a series of changes which Austria assuredly would not be the last to regret. If the war is to terminate by our overthrow, has Austria nothing to regret in such a catastrophe? What profit is she to acquire, what glory to win, if we are overwhelmed by all the armies of Europe? You, my prince, have a boundless harvest of glory to reap; but it is to be gained only by your remaining the arbiter of events, and the only way in which you can do so is by an immediate peace."—*CAULAINCOURT to METTERNICH, 8th February 1814*; CAPEFIGUE, x. 372.

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erroneous ideas concerning Lord Castlereagh. He is a man of a cool and just mind, without passions, who will never permit himself to be governed by coteries. It would be unfortunate if, in the outset of the congress, prejudices should be entertained against the individuals engaged in it. If Napoleon really wishes for peace, he will obtain it on reasonable terms." This separate and confidential correspondence between Metternich and Caulaincourt, unknown to the other members of the congress, but yet without disturbing the unanimity of its resolutions, continued the whole time it sat: a singular circumstance, indicating at once the strength of the separate interests which had led Austria into such a proceeding, the extremely delicate nature of the negotiations which were in dependence, and the exalted honour which, in spite of such prepossessions, prevented her from swerving, in the final result, from her pledged faith and the general interests of Europe.¹

¹ Cap. x. 373, 374. See the whole in Fain, 279, 309.

19.
Napoleon gives Caulaincourt full powers after the defeat of La Rothière.

The battle of La Rothière, and retreat of the French army from Troyes, produced a most important effect upon the views of Napoleon at the congress which had recently been opened. Justly alarmed for his capital, which seemed now to be menaced by an overwhelming force, and aware of the perfect unanimity which prevailed between the plenipotentiaries of the Allied sovereigns,* he at length gave Caulaincourt those full powers which he had so anxiously solicited; and authorised him to sign any thing that might appear necessary to avoid the

* "Sire! I am here at Chatillon, opposed to four diplomatists, counting the three English for one. They have all the same instructions, prepared by the secretaries of state of their respective courts. Their language has been dictated to them in advance: the declarations which they tender are all ready-made: they do not take a step, nor utter a word, which has not been preconcerted. They are desirous of a protocol, and I am not disinclined to it; so precious are the moments, and yet so great the hazard by a false step of ruining all. I set out with my hands bound: I have just received a letter full of alarms: and I now find myself invested with full powers. I am at once reined in and spurred on: I know not the cause of this extraordinary change."—CAULAINCOURT to NAPOLEON, Feb. 6, 1814; FAIN, 289; CAPEFIGUE, x. 375, 376. It is not surprising that Caulaincourt was at a loss to conceive the cause of this sudden change: for so inveterate was the habit of Napoleon of concealing the truth, and of dealing in falsehoods, even with his most confidential servants, that only two days before, in his letter to Caulaincourt, detailing the battle of La Rothière, he had said—"Schwartzenberg's report is a piece of folly: *there was no battle*: the Old Guard was not there; the Young Guard did not charge; a few pieces of cannon have been captured by a charge of horse; but the army was in march for the bridge of Lesmont when that event arrived; and had he been two hours later, the enemy would not have forced us."—NAPOLEON to CAULAINCOURT, Feb. 4, 1814—in HARDENBERG, xii. 332. The words in italics are omitted in Fain's quotation of this letter.—See FAIN, 285; *Pièces Just.*

risk of a battle, and save Paris from being taken.* It was not, however, without the utmost difficulty that this great concession was extorted from the Emperor; and the manner in which it occurred is singularly characteristic of the mingled firmness and exaltation of his mind. Caulaincourt had represented to him, by letter on 31st January, the absolute necessity of his receiving precise and positive instructions at the opening of the congress: "The fate of France," said he, "may depend on a peace or an armistice, which must be concluded in four days. In such circumstances I demand precise instructions, which may leave me at liberty to act."¹

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¹ Cap. x. 375.
Hard. xii.
333, 334.

When this letter was received, Maret, with tears in his eyes, entreated the Emperor to yield to necessity, and give the full powers which were so urgently demanded. Instead of answering, Napoleon opened a volume of Montesquieu's works, containing the "Grandeur et décadence des Romains," which lay in his cabinet, and read the following passage:—"I know nothing more magnanimous than the resolution which a monarch took who has reigned in our times, (Louis XIV.,) to bury himself under the ruins of his throne rather than accept conditions unworthy of a king. He had a mind too lofty to descend lower than his fortunes had sunk him; he knew well that courage may strengthen a crown, but infamy never." Maret with earnestness represented that nothing could be more magnanimous than to sacrifice even his glory to the safety of the state, which would fall with him. "Well, be it so," replied the Emperor after a pause: "let Caulaincourt sign whatever is necessary to procure peace; I will bear the shame of it, but I will not dictate my own disgrace." In two hours after, the full powers were despatched.²

20.
Magnanimous resolutions of Napoleon.

² Hard. xii.
333, 334.
Cap. x. 375.

The Allied powers were unanimous in the terms which they proposed to France; and, after the preliminary

* "I am authorised, duke, to make known to you, that the intention of the Emperor is that you should consider yourself as invested with all the powers necessary, in these important circumstances, to take the part which you shall deem advisable to arrest the progress of the enemy. I have sent you a letter with the needful powers which you have solicited. At the moment when his majesty is about to quit this city, he has enjoined me to despatch to you a second; and to make you aware, in express terms, that his majesty gives you a *carte blanche* to conduct the negotiations to a happy issue—to save the capital, on which depend the last hopes of the nation, and avoid a battle."—MARET to CAULAINCOURT, *Troyes*, 5th February 1814: FAIN, 286, 287; *Pièces Just.*

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21.

Conditions
proposed by
the Allied
powers.
Feb. 7.

Feb. 9.

¹ Caulain-
court to Met-
ternich, Feb.
9, 1814.
Fain, 293.
Hard. xii.
337.

22.

They are de-
parted from
by Napoleon.

formalities had been gone through, they were fully developed in a note lodged in their joint names, on the 7th February. They were to this effect:—"Considering the situation of Europe in respect to France, at the close of the successes obtained by their arms, the Allied plenipotentiaries have orders to demand that France should be restricted to *her limits before the Revolution*, with the exception of subordinate arrangements for mutual convenience, and the restitution which England is ready to make for such concession. As a natural consequence of this, France must renounce all direct influence beyond the future limits of Germany, Italy, and Switzerland." Such was the consternation produced by the battle of La Rothière, that Caulaincourt, two days afterwards, wrote in reply: "I wish to know whether, by consenting to the terms which the Allies have proposed, that France shall be restricted to her ancient limits, I shall immediately obtain an armistice. If by such a sacrifice an armistice can instantly be obtained, I am ready to make it; nay, I shall be ready, on that supposition, to surrender immediately a portion of the fortified places which that sacrifice must make us ultimately relinquish."¹

To all appearance, therefore, the congress at this period was on the eve of producing a general peace; and an armistice, as the first step towards it, might hourly be expected. At this critical juncture, however, a letter was forwarded to the plenipotentiaries from the Emperor of Russia, requesting a suspension of these sittings for a few days, till he had an opportunity of concerting with his Allies upon the terms to be demanded; and they were accordingly adjourned to the 17th. The fate of the world depended on this delay; for, when the conferences were resumed, events had occurred which rendered all accommodation impossible between the parties, and irrecoverably threw them back upon the decision of the sword. Napoleon, who had with great difficulty been brought to give full powers to Caulaincourt to treat after the disaster of La Rothière, no sooner saw the advantages which the ill-judged separation of the grand army from that of Silesia would give him, than he resolved to retract his concessions, and again trust all to the hazard of arms. He received intelligence of the terms demanded on the

9th at Nogent, when he was just on the eve of setting out on his expedition to Sezanne, which terminated in so disastrous a manner for Blucher. Perceiving the advantage which this movement was likely to afford, he broke out in the most vehement manner to Maret and Berthier, against the disgraceful nature of the terms which were demanded.

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“What !” said he, with indescribable energy, “do you urge me to sign such a treaty, and trample under foot my coronation oath to preserve inviolate the territory of the republic ? Disasters unheard of might compel me to relinquish the conquests I myself have made : but to abandon those also made before me ; to betray the trust made over to me with such confidence ; to leave France, after so much blood has been shed and such victories gained, smaller than ever ! Could I do it without treachery, without disgrace ? You are fearful of a continuation of the war ; and I am still more afraid of dangers, yet more certain, which you do not perceive. If we renounce the frontier of the Rhine, it is not merely France which recedes, but Austria and Prussia which advance. France has need of peace ; but such a one as they seek to impose upon it, would be more dangerous than the most inveterate war. What would I be to the French, if I had signed their humiliation ? What could I answer to the republicans of the Senate, when they came to ask me for the frontier of the Rhine ? God preserve me from such affronts ! Write to Caulaincourt, since you will have it so, but tell him that I reject the treaty. I prefer to run the greatest risks of war.”¹

23.
Energetic expressions used by him on the occasion.

When such were the feelings of Napoleon on setting out upon his expedition against Blucher, it was not to be expected that his disposition would be rendered more pacific by his extraordinary and brilliant successes over that commander. No sooner, accordingly, was the first of these victories, that at Champaubert, gained, than Napoleon wrote to Caulaincourt that a brilliant change had taken place in his affairs ; that new advantages were in preparation ; and that the plenipotentiary of France was now entitled to assume a less humiliated attitude. Meanwhile, the privy council at Paris, to whom the positions of the Allies at Chatillon had been referred,

¹ Fahn, 87, 89.

24.
He rises in his demands with his subsequent successes.
Feb. 10.

Feb. 13.

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Feb. 17.

¹ Fain, 84,
106. Napo-
leon to Cau-
laincourt,
Feb. 17,
1814. Fain,
297.

25.

Napoleon or-
ders Eugene
to evacuate
Italy, and
then counter-
mands the
order.
Feb. 5.

unanimously reported that they should be agreed to. The Emperor, however, dazzled by the brilliancy of his victories over Blucher, wrote to the Emperor of Austria on the 17th, from Nangis, that he was as anxious as ever for an accommodation; but that the advantages which he had now gained entitled him to demand less unfavourable terms; while to Caulaincourt he wrote, on the same day, that the extraordinary powers he had received were only intended to avoid a battle and save the capital; that now this danger no longer existed, and consequently, the negotiation would resume its ordinary course of proceeding, and he was to sign nothing without the express authority of the Emperor.¹*

This extraordinary change in his fortunes, not only induced Napoleon to resume the powers to treat which he had conferred on Caulaincourt, but led to another step on his part, in the end attended with not less fatal effect upon his fortunes. During the first moments of alarm consequent on the battle of La Rothière and retreat from Troyes, he had written to Eugene Beauharnais to the effect, that the crisis had now become so violent in France that it was plain the contest would be decided there; that all subordinate considerations had thence become of no importance; and therefore, that, after leaving garrisons in a few strongholds, he should immediately withdraw his whole forces across the Alps, and hasten to the decisive point on the banks of the Seine. This order, worthy of Napoleon's genius, and in strict conformity with his system of war, would have brought forty thou-

* "I gave you a *carte blanche* only to avoid a battle and save Paris, which was then the only hope of the nation. The battle has taken place; Providence has blessed our arms. I have made 30,000 or 40,000 prisoners, taken two hundred pieces of cannon, a great number of generals, and all this without almost a serious encounter. Yesterday I cut up the army of Prince Schwartzenberg, and I hope to destroy it before it has repassed the frontiers. Your attitude should continue the same: you should do every thing to procure peace; but my intention now is, that you should *sign nothing without my authority, because I alone know my own position*. Generally speaking, I will only consent to an honourable peace, such as on the basis proposed at Frankfort. My position is certainly better now than it was at that time. They could then set me at defiance; I had gained no advantages over them, and they were on the verge of my territories. Now I have gained immense advantages over them; so great indeed that a military career of twenty years, and no small celebrity, can exhibit no parallel to them; still I am ready to cease hostilities, and to allow the enemy to retire peaceably, if they will conclude peace on the basis of Frankfort." At the end of this letter, these words were added in the handwriting of Napoleon—"Ne signez rien, ne signez rien."—NAPOLEON to CAULAINCOURT, 17th February 1814; FAIN, 297, 298; *Pièces Just.*

sand experienced veterans on the rear of the Austrian grand army at the most critical period of the campaign, and, in all probability, prevented the advance to Paris and dethronement of the Emperor. But the successes over Blucher restored to such a degree his confidence in his good fortune, that he wrote to Eugene, the very night after the battle of Montmirail, forbidding him to retire, and assuring him that he was singly adequate to the defence of France. Nay, so far was he transported by the sanguine views which he now entertained of his affairs, that he resumed his ideas of German conquest, and openly said to those around him, "I am nearer Vienna than the Allies are to Paris." Thus, the only effect of these successes was to restore the naturally rigid and unbending tone of his character, to revive his projects of universal dominion, cause him to reject the throne of old France offered him by the Allies, and induce him to hazard all on the still doubtful issue of military operations.¹

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¹ Koch, i.
269. Beauch.
i. 328.

But whatever confidence Napoleon himself might feel in the continued appeal to arms, the same feeling was far from being shared by the authorities, or more enlightened part of the inhabitants of Paris. When the couriers, indeed, succeeding one another, adorned with laurel, and announcing with great exaggeration the really marvellous victories of the Emperor, entered the courts of the Tuileries; and, still more, when the long files of Russian and Prussian prisoners were conducted with all the pomp of war, and amidst the strains of triumphal music, along the Boulevards—the multitude loudly cheered the Emperor, and hope in the revival of his star was again awakened in many breasts. But amidst all this seeming congratulation, no return of real confidence was generally felt. Experience soon showed that victory attended only the arms of the Emperor in person; that while he was successful in one quarter, the enemy was pressing on in another; and it seemed next to impossible in the end, that the gallant band of veterans whom he commanded should not be worn out by the forces, always twice, often three times more numerous, by which they were surrounded. By the more intelligent and far-seeing of the community, even his victories were more dreaded than

26.
General feeling of despondency at Paris.

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his defeats. The latter led to humiliation and peace, but the former tended to confidence and war; and it was already felt that a continuance of the contest, in the present exhausted state of France, was a greater evil than any possible calamities by which it might be terminated. In the Senate, in particular, these ideas were violently fermenting; every one distrusted his neighbour, because he was conscious of vacillation in himself; all confidence in the stability of the imperial throne was at an end; even the most prudent were beginning to speak aloud as to the Emperor being the sole obstacle to peace. Strange rumours were in circulation, to the effect that Joseph and the Empress proposed to make peace independently of the Emperor; and the selfish and ambitious, anticipating an approaching convulsion, were looking about for the safest harbour in the storm.¹

¹ Savary, iii.
237. Cap. x.
406, 407.

27.
Treaty of
Chaumont.
March 1.

But upon the Allied powers the change in the diplomatic language of Caulaincourt, in obedience to the instructions he had received, coupled with the evident danger to the liberties of Europe from the returning fortune and increasing audacity of Napoleon, produced effects of the very highest importance. They now saw clearly that they had no chance, not merely of success but of existence, except in perfect unanimity and the most vigorous warfare. The exulting expressions of Napoleon, that he was nearer Vienna than the Allies were to Paris, had not been lost upon the assembled ministers; and Lord Castlereagh, in particular, had been indefatigable in his efforts to convince the Austrian ministers that they would infallibly be the first object of the French Emperor's wrath if his victorious legions should again cross the Rhine. In these views he was strongly supported by the Emperor Alexander, who, in a memoir submitted by him to the Allied sovereigns on the 15th February, both manfully combated the desponding views then so general at the Allied headquarters as to the critical nature of their situation, and developed the noblest and most luminous views as to the moral nature of the contest in which they were engaged, which had yet been uttered since the commencement of the war. Metternich cordially supported the same ideas; the successes of Napoleon against Blucher had awakened all

his former apprehensions of his power; he now feared more for Vienna than for the fall of Marie Louise, and was desirous to prove the sincerity of his imperial master in the great objects of the alliance.* The result of their united efforts was the TREATY OF CHAUMONT; one of the most remarkable diplomatic acts of modern times, and which presented an impassable barrier to the ambition and efforts of France.¹

By this treaty it was stipulated that, in the event of Napoleon refusing the terms which had been offered him—viz. the reduction of France to the limits of the old monarchy, as they stood prior to the Revolution—the four Allied powers, Austria, Prussia, Russia, and England,

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¹ Cap. x.
397, 400.
Hard. xii.
351. Dan.
189, 191.

28.

Terms of the
treaty.
March 1.

* Alexander's opinions, recorded in this memorable state paper, are deserving of the most profound attention, as demonstrating both the admirable views which he entertained on the nature of the contest, and the high moral courage by which they were sustained:—"Victory having brought us to Frankfort, the Allies offered to France conditions of peace, which were *then* considered proportionate to the successes which they had obtained; at that period, these conditions might have been called the object of the war. I strongly opposed the proposal to negotiate then; not because I did not desire peace, but because I thought that time would offer us more favourable opportunities, when we had proved to the enemy our superiority over him. All are now convinced of the justice of my arguments; for to it we are indebted for the incalculable difference between the terms offered at Frankfort and at Chatillon—that is, the restoration by France of territories without which Germany and Italy would be lost on the first offensive movement.

"The destruction of the enemy's political power does not constitute the grand aim of the efforts which it remains for us to make; but it may become so, if the fortune of war, the example of Paris, and the evident inclination of the inhabitants of the provinces of France, shall give the Allies the possibility of openly proclaiming it. I do not share the opinion of the Allies on the greater or less degree of importance attached by them to the *dethronement of Napoleon*, if that measure can be justified on grounds of wisdom. On the contrary, I should consider that event as the completion of the deliverance of Europe; as the brightest example of justice and morality it is possible to display to the world; and in short, as the happiest event for France itself, whose internal condition can never be without influence on the tranquillity of her neighbours. Nobody is more convinced than I am of the inconstancy of fortune in war; yet I do not reckon a partial failure, or even the loss of a battle, as a misfortune which should in one day deprive us of the fruit of our victories; and I am convinced that the skill of our generals, the valour of our troops, our superiority in cavalry, the reinforcements which are following us, and the force of public opinion, would never allow us to fall so low as some seem to apprehend. I am by no means adverse to continuing the negotiations at Chatillon, or giving Caulaincourt the explanations he desires regarding the future destiny of Europe, provided France would return to her old frontiers. As to the armistice which is requested in the letter to Prince Metternich, I conceive this proceeding of the French plenipotentiary to be contrary to the existing usages of negotiations, and the proposal to be advantageous only to the enemy. I am as much convinced as ever, that all probability is in favour of a successful issue, if the Allies keep to the views and obligations by which they have been hitherto guided with reference to their grand object, the *destruction of the enemy's armies*. With a good understanding among themselves, their success will be complete, and checks will be easily borne. I do not think that the time has yet arrived for us to stop short; and I trust that, as in former conjunctures, new events will show us when that time shall have arrived."—*Memoir to the Allied Sovereigns by the EMPEROR ALEXANDER*, 15th Feb. 1814; DANILEFSKY, pp. 88, 90.

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should each maintain one hundred and fifty thousand men in the field ; that to provide for their maintenance, Great Britain should pay an annual subsidy of five millions sterling, to be equally divided between the three Continental powers, besides maintaining her own contingent complete from her own resources. It was stipulated, also, that each power should have a commissary at the headquarters of the different armies ; that if any of the Allied powers was attacked, each of the others should forthwith send to its assistance an army of sixty thousand men, including ten thousand horse, besides forwarding additional troops, if required ; that if England chose to furnish her contingent, or any part of it, in foreign troops, she should pay annually twenty pounds sterling for every foot soldier, and thirty for every horseman ; that the trophies should be divided equally, and no peace made except by common consent ; that none of the contracting parties should enter into engagements with other states, except of the same tenor : in fine, that this treaty should be in force for twenty years, and might be renewed before the expiration of that period.¹

¹ See the Treaty in Martens, N. R. i. 683 ; and Hard. xii. 352. Schoell, Hist. des Trait. de Paix, x. 417.

29.

Secret articles
of the treaty.

In addition to these public stipulations, several secret articles were inserted in the treaty, which eventually proved of the highest importance to the reconstruction of the states of Europe, after the deluge of the French Revolution had subsided. It was agreed, 1st, That Germany should be restored in the form of a federal union, embracing all the powers of which it was composed ; that Switzerland should be independent, under the guarantee of the Allied powers ; Italy divided into independent states ; Spain restored to Ferdinand VII., with its ancient limits ; Holland enlarged in territory, and formed into a kingdom for the Prince of Orange. 2d, Power was reserved to Spain, Portugal, Sweden, and the Prince of Orange, to accede to the treaty. 3d, It was declared that, "considering the necessity which might exist, even after the conclusion of a definitive treaty of peace, to keep in the field, during a certain time, forces adequate to carry into effect the arrangements which the Allied powers might agree upon for confirming the peace of Europe, the high contracting parties agree to concert among themselves the requisite provisions,"² not only

² Hard. xii. 353. Schoell, x. 421.

regarding the necessity, but the importance and distribution of the forces requisite for this purpose ; but under this limitation, that none of the powers should be obliged to keep such forces for this end on foot more than a year, without their express consent."

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The conclusion of this treaty was a virtual dissolution of the congress of Chatillon ; for it established so wide a difference between the views of Napoleon and those of the Allies, and confirmed the latter so strongly in their determination to contend to the uttermost for the reduction of France to its ancient limits, that, opposed as these views were to the firm resolution of Napoleon to hold out for the frontier of the Rhine, all prospect of an accommodation was at an end. The congress continued to sit for three weeks after, the Allied powers firmly insisting on the relinquishment by France of all its conquests since the Revolution ; and Caulaincourt, under Napoleon's direction, constantly shifting his ground, and endeavouring to elude such rigorous conditions. It was not with his own good-will, however, that the French plenipotentiary insisted on these terms ; for he saw as clearly as possible the immense risks which the Emperor was running by holding out for the frontier of the Rhine, and throwing all on the hazard of arms to obtain it ; and represented in the most urgent, though respectful terms, the necessity of bending to the force of circumstances, and accepting the monarchy of Louis XIV. as the price of pacifying Europe.*¹

30.
Great effects
of this treaty
on the con-
gress.

¹ Lond. 277.
Burgh. 155,
158. Fain,
302.

Napoleon, however, was inexorable : all the efforts of

* "The question about to be decided is so important—it may have at the instant consequences so fatal, that I regard it as a paramount duty to recur again, even at the risk of displeasing your majesty, to what I have already so frequently insisted on. There is no weakness, sire, in my opinion ; but I see the dangers which menace France and the throne of your majesty, and I conjure you to prevent them. We must make sacrifices ; we must do so immediately : as at Prague, if we do not take care, the opportunity of doing so will escape us ; the circumstances of this moment bear a closer resemblance to those which there occurred than your majesty may be aware. At Prague peace was not concluded, and Austria declared against us, because we would not believe that the term fixed for the closing of the congress would be rigorously adhered to. Here the negotiations are on the eve of being broken off, because you cannot believe that a question of such immense importance may depend on such or such an answer which we may make before a certain day. The more I consider what has passed, the more I am convinced that, if we do not go into the *contre-projets* demanded, but insist upon modifications on the basis of Frankfort, all is closed. I venture to say, because I feel, that neither the glory of your majesty nor the power of France depend on the possession of Antwerp, or any other point of our new frontiers."—CAULAINCOURT to NAPOLEON, *Chatillon*, 6th March 1814 ; FAIN, 301, 302 ; *Pièces Just.*

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31.

Napoleon resolutely holds out for war, in opposition to Caulaincourt's advices.

his diplomatist, after the plenary powers he had granted during the alarm after the battle of La Rothière had been recalled on the 17th of February, not only failed in convincing him of the necessity of descending from his ideas, but even of extracting from him any definite statement of the terms on which he himself was willing to come to an accommodation. He was evidently determined to cast all on the decision of the sword, and impressed with the belief that his genius, or his star, would extricate him from his present, as they had done from so many other perilous circumstances.* War, in consequence, recommenced with more activity than ever: the armistice of Lusigny, even in its application to the operations of the grand army, to which it was expressly confined, proved little more than a shadow; while by a singular contrast, characteristic of the manners of modern Europe, the most polished forms of courtesy were observed at the congress of Chatillon. The choicest wines of the Rhone and Champagne, the most delicate viands of Paris, passed as if by enchantment through the French lines, to enrich the diplomatic dinners, which succeeded each other without ceasing; the Allied plenipotentiaries strove, by the most delicate attentions to M. Caulaincourt, to assuage, for a few moments at least, the overwhelming anxiety with which he was oppressed; and French ladies of rank and beauty added the charm of female fascination to the assembly of hostile diplomatists, intent on the overthrow of their country.¹

While this important negotiation was going on at Chatillon, military operations of the most active kind had been resumed between Napoleon in person and the army of Silesia, which had now, under the direction of Blücher, advanced beyond La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and almost to

¹ Lond. 277, 278. Burgh. 155, 162. Hard. xii. 356, 359. Fain, 302, 303.

* “Pendant ces négociations (à Chatillon) je ne conçois pas comment je ne suis pas devenu fou. Le temps des illusions était passé. L'actualité était dévorante; et à mes lettres je ne recevais que des réponses évasives, alors qu'il eut fallor traiter à tout prix. L'avenir nous restait: à présent il ne nous reste qu'un tombeau. Mes lettres n'étaient qu'une pâle copie de ce que je disais à l'Empereur dans nos entretiens particuliers. J'insistais pour qu'il me donnât son ultimatum sincère, afin que je fusse en mesure de terminer invariablement avec les plenipotentiaires alliés, qui avaient reçu certainement des instructions positives. Il me faut être vrai, car ceci est devenu de l'histoire: *L'Empereur ne répondait jamais catégoriquement à cette demande*. Il érudait, avec une merveilleuse adresse, de livrer le secret de sa pensée intime; cette manière est un des traits saillans de son genre d'esprit.”—*Souvenirs de CAULAINCOURT*, i. 302, 329, 330.

Meaux, in the direction of Paris. Napoleon was no sooner informed of the danger which menaced the capital, than he set out, as already mentioned,* at daybreak on the morning of the 27th February, from Troyes, for Arcis-sur-Aube and Sezanne, to follow on the traces of the Prussian marshal. Blucher had some days before marched in the same direction, having on the 25th crossed the Aube at Anglure, and on the two following days advanced, driving Marmont before him, to La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, where the French marshal effected his junction with Mortier, who had retired from the neighbourhood of Soissons before the approaching corps of Winzingerode and Woronzoff, now moving forward to co-operate with the army of Silesia, in conformity with the plan agreed on at Bar-sur-Aube on the 25th.† The light troops of the Russians were directed by Blucher to make an attack on Meaux, while, to deceive the enemy as to his real intentions, the Prussians were ordered to repair the bridges over the Marne, at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, which had been burned by the French, and crossing over, menace the French marshal on that side.¹

In pursuance of these orders, Sacken's light troops took possession, with little resistance, of that part of Meaux which is situated on the left bank of the Marne; but, at the very time that he was making preparations to force his passage across to that part of the town which is on the right bank, Marmont and Mortier, who were too experienced to be diverted from the decisive point of the Paris road by the feint at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, arrived in breathless haste, and instantly manning the old walls, which had been deserted by the national guard who formed the garrison of the town, made every preparation for a vigorous defence. Their opportune arrival obliged Sacken to defer his attack till the following morning; and in the course of the night Blucher received intelligence from Tettenborn that the French Emperor, in person, was marching on his rear by Sezanne. He immediately drew off his troops, and moved next day in the direction of Soissons, with a view to unite with Winzingerode and Woronzoff, and give battle to Napoleon.² It was full time he should be interrupted in his career, for

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32.

Advance of
Blucher to-
wards Meaux.
Feb. 27.

Feb. 27.

¹ Plotho, iii.
265, 269.
Fain, 141,
142. Koch, i.
358. Dan.
201. Valen-
tine, ii. 131.

33.
Which is
partially oc-
cupied and
abandoned by
his troops.

Feb. 28.

² Dan. 201,
202. Koch, i.
358, 360.
Fain, 141,
142. Plotho,
iii. 265, 271.

* See *Ante*, Chap. lxxxvi. § 6.

† *Ib.* Chap. lxxxvi. § 5.

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34.
Combat at
Bar-sur-
Aube.
Feb. 27

three days more would have brought him to the gates of the capital, where the roar of Sacken's cannon, during the attack on Meaux, was distinctly heard, and startled the multitude at the very moment that the cannon of the Invalides were announcing the victories over the grand army at Nangis and Montereau.

The departure of Napoleon from Troyes was soon made known to the outposts of the grand Allied army, by the languor and inactivity with which their rearguard was pursued. This, coupled with the intelligence which Schwartzemberg received at the same time, of the advance of Blucher towards the Marne, induced him, at the earnest request of the King of Prussia, who was justly alarmed for that general when the whole weight of Napoleon was directed against him, to resume the offensive on the great road from Troyes to Chaumont. With this view, early on the morning of the 27th, the corps of Wrede and Wittgenstein, mustering about thirty-five thousand sabres and bayonets, were drawn up opposite to Bar-sur-Aube, on the road leading to Chaumont. Oudinot commanded the French in that quarter, who, though consisting nominally of two corps of infantry and two of cavalry, could not bring above seventeen thousand men into the field; so that the Allies were more than two to one. The French, nevertheless, made a gallant defence. They were skilfully posted across several ravines, which descend from Bar towards the Aube, in such a manner that they could be reached only along the plateaus which lay between them, where, the ground being narrow, the superiority of the attacking force was not likely to be so severely felt. Wittgenstein's plan was to attack the enemy in front with Gorchakoff's corps, while Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, supported by Pahlen's horse, menaced their flank. The French, however, commenced the action by storming the height in front of Ailleville, which formed the connecting point between their front and flank attack. Upon this, Wittgenstein ordered up Gorchakoff's corps, supported by Pahlen's cuirassiers, to retake that important position. The cavalry were repulsed; but, after a severe struggle, the Russian infantry succeeded in regaining the height. Upon this turning point being gained, a general attack along the whole Allied line took place. Meanwhile, Pahlen's

cuirassiers had been detached towards Sevigny, in order to threaten the enemy's communications, and thus Gorchakoff's men were exposed, without adequate support, to the furious charge of Kellerman's dragoons. These splendid troops, just arrived from Spain, speedily routed the Russian hussars, and threw their whole centre into such disorder, that Wittgenstein could only avert total defeat by concentrating his artillery at the menaced point. He consequently sent orders, in haste, to Pahlen to remeasure his steps, and bring up his heavy squadrons to the support of the wavering part of the line.¹

Highly excited by this brilliant success, the veteran Peninsular squadron threw themselves, with the utmost gallantry, on the Russian batteries in the centre; but the experienced gunners allowed them to approach within a hundred paces, and then opened such a tremendous point-blank discharge of grape, that four hundred horsemen were in a few minutes stretched on the plain, and the remainder recoiled in disorder. At the same time Schwartzenberg, who had come up in person, ordered two brigades of cavalry and one of infantry from Wrede's corps to support the centre; and, conceiving that part of the line now adequately secured, sent orders to Pahlen to wheel about a second time and resume his original march to Sevigny and Dolancourt, to threaten the enemy's left flank. Shortly after, Wrede, who had now come into action, commenced a vigorous attack on Bar-sur-Aube itself, on the French right, so that both their flanks were menaced. These movements of necessity compelled Oudinot to retire; but in order to gain time to effect his retreat in order, his troops made the most vigorous resistance at all points, especially at Bar, which was the theatre of a most sanguinary conflict. Pahlen's brilliant dragoons, who kept marching and counter-marching all day without taking any part in the combat, did not arrive in time to molest the passage of the Aube at Dolancourt; and thus the French effected their retreat before nightfall without being deprived of either guns or standards; but they sustained a loss of three thousand men, of whom five hundred were prisoners.¹ The Allied loss was about two thousand four hundred men; but they gained Bar-sur-Aube, and,

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¹ Koch, ii. 1,
8. Burgh.
165, 166.
Dan. 179,
180. Fain,
143. Plotho,
iii. 240, 243.
Vold. iv. 8,
146. Die
Grosse Chron.
iii. 437, 440.

35.

Victory of
the Allies.

¹ Vaud. ii.
75, 80. Koch,
1, 8, 11.
Burgh. 160,
161. Dan.
179, 180.
Plotho, iii.
241, 244.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
440, 444.
Vold. iv. 8,
15.

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what was of far more consequence, restored the credit and spirit of the grand army, and arrested a retreat to the Vosges mountains, or possibly to the Rhine.

36.
Wound of
Wittgenstein.

Count Wittgenstein was severely wounded, Prince Schwartzenberg slightly, in this action; and the former being obliged to retire for a season from active operations, was succeeded in the command of his corps by General Raeffskoi. Except for his loss, the Russian service would have had no cause to lament any circumstance which brought the indomitable hero of Smolensko * more prominently forward: but the wound which compelled Wittgenstein to withdraw was a serious injury to the Allied cause, and a great misfortune to himself; for it occurred at the most critical period of the contest, and four weeks more would have shown the saviour of St Petersburg the dome of the Invalides. Though the jealousy of the Russian troops at a foreigner, and the ill success which attended his arms when acting as generalissimo at Lützen, prevented his being invested with the supreme command, in the later stages of the war, he throughout bore a distinguished part in its achievements, and contributed much by the boldness of his advice to sustain, when it was greatly required, the vigour of the Allied councils.¹

¹ Dan. 181.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
445.

37.
His character

Daring, impetuous, often inconsiderate, he was the Marcellus, if Barclay de Tolly was the Fabius, of the Russian army. Like Blucher, he was ever urgent to advance, and uniformly supported the most daring measures; in action, his buoyant courage never failed to bring him into the foremost ranks, and his frequent wounds attest how fearlessly he shared the dangers of the meanest soldiers. He could not be said to be a great master of strategy, and his want of circumspection in adequately supporting his advanced columns frequently exposed his troops to serious reverses, of which the combat at Nangis had recently afforded an example; † yet was this very peculiarity of his temperament, directing, as he did, troops so firm and resolute as the Russians, often of the most essential service to his country, and the general cause of Europe. His obstinate resistance and unconquerable vigour on the Dwina, unquestionably

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxii. § 42.

† *Ib.* Chap. lxxxv. § 76.

saved St Petersburg during the first part of the campaign of 1812; his daring advance against Napoleon's right at Lützen all but exposed that great conqueror to total defeat; and his able retreat at Bautzen snatched complete victory from his grasp when it was almost already seized. The alacrity and fidelity with which, in subordinate situations, he subsequently conducted his own corps, both in 1813 and 1814, proved that his patriotism was superior to all unworthy considerations of jealousy; while his last achievement in the campaign at Bar-sur-Aube, for which he was made a field-marshal, had the most important effect in reviving the spirit of the grand army, and restoring vigour and unanimity to the Allied councils.¹

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Although, however, the successful result of this battle sufficiently proved that Napoleon, with the main body of his army, was absent, and that a thin curtain of troops alone stood in front of the grand army, yet it was impossible at first to infuse an adequate degree of resolution into their direction. The retiring columns of Oudinot were hardly at all pursued; Prince Schwartzberg assigned as a reason, that he could not move forward till he was informed of the direction and tendency of Macdonald's corps, which was advancing near Vandœuvres. This corps, however, proved so weak that it was met and repulsed by the cavalry alone of Count Pahlen and Prince Eugene of Würtemberg; and intelligence having been received on the 1st March that Napoleon, with the main body of his forces, was at Arcis-sur-Aube on the preceding day, following fast on Blücher's traces, it became evident that the plan of the campaign agreed on at Bar-sur-Aube, on the 25th February, could no longer be adhered to, and he was in a manner forced into more vigorous operations.

¹ Dan. 181,
182.

38.
Schwartz-
berg at
length
advances.

On the same day that this information was received from the army of Silesia, a grand reconnaissance with the cavalry took place towards Vandœuvres, and it was ascertained that the enemy were in force in no direction. Orders were at length given for a general advance. Headquarters were, on the day following, moved to Bar-sur-Aube; the retreat was stopped at all points, and preparations were made for attacking the enemy immediately, in the position which he occupied along the Barse, and, if possible, driving him from Troyes.² Oudinot

March 1.

March 2.
² Burgh. 173,
174. Dan.
185, 187.
Koch, ii. 13,
21. Plotho,
iii. 246, 247.
Vaud. ii. 87,
90. Die
GrosseChron.
iii. 452, 454.

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and Macdonald had now collected all their forces in that position, and did not appear disposed to relinquish it without a combat.

The attack took place on the 3d, and was maintained with great vigour at all points. The united French corps, which were all under the command of Marshal Macdonald, mustered thirty-five thousand combatants, of which nearly nine thousand were cavalry. The great preponderance of this arm, and the desperate use the French generals had made of it at Bar-sur-Aube, rendered the Allies cautious in their movements; but their great superiority of number made ultimate success a matter of certainty, for they had already sixty thousand men in the field, without bringing up the imperial guards or reserves from the neighbourhood of Chaumont. The position which the French marshal had chosen, strong, and on the elevated plateau of Laubressel, was inaccessible in front and flank in ordinary times, by reason of the morasses with which it was surrounded; but it was by no means equally defensible during the hard frost which had for nearly two months prevailed over all Europe at that time, and rendered the deepest marshes as easy of crossing as the smoothest plain. Taking advantage of this circumstance, Schwartzberg directed Wrede to attack the position in front by the great road to Vandœuvres, which passed through it, while Wittgenstein's corps, now under Gorchakoff, second in command to Raefskoi, assailed it on the right, and the Prince-royal of Würtemberg and Count Giulay menaced it on the left, by the road from Bar-sur-Seine to Troyes.¹

At three o'clock the signal was given by the discharge of two guns from Wrede's corps, and the troops all advanced to the attack. Hardly were the first rounds of artillery fired, when, seeing that Prince Eugene's movement was rapidly turning them, the French on the extreme left began to retreat. The Russian cuirassiers under Pahlen instantly dashed forward, and broke two battalions which had not time to form square; and, passing on, attacked a park of artillery which was just entering Troyes, dispersed the drivers, and took the greater part of the guns. General Gerard, who lay sick among the carriages, was only saved from being made prisoner by the intrepidity of a few sappers, who came up to his rescue. Upon

39.
Plan for the
combat.
March 3.

¹ Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
459, 460.
Koch, ii.
20, 23.
Dan. 187.
Burgh. 174.

40.
Defeat of the
French at La
Guillotière.
Feb. 3.

this, Count St Germain's dragoons were brought forward, and these admirable troops, charging home, not only checked Pahlen's men, already blown by their success, but retook several of the guns. Soon, however, the deep and heavy masses of the Allied infantry arrived in line, each column preceded by a formidable array of artillery. Gerard, who commanded the centre, seeing he was certain of being turned by both flanks if he remained where he was, soon gave orders for a retreat, and the plateau of Laubressel, the key of the position, was abandoned. Schwartzberg, perceiving that the retreat was commencing, ordered Wrede with his Bavarians to storm the bridge of La Guillotière over the Barse, which was done in the most brilliant style, and rendered the position accessible in front at all points. The French now retreated on all sides, and after sustaining, with various success, repeated charges of the Allied horse, withdrew wholly into Troyes, which they abandoned next day by capitulation, having in this action suffered a loss of nine pieces of cannon and two thousand men, of whom fifteen hundred were made prisoners; while the Allies had not to lament the loss, in all, of more than eight hundred.¹

Every thing now conspired to recommend vigorous operations to the grand army. Its credit was restored, and its spirit revived, by the successful issue of the two last actions: its retreat had been arrested, and turned into a victorious advance; the ancient capital of Champagne had again fallen into its hands; Napoleon was absent, and the troops opposed to it, dejected and downcast, were hardly a third of its own numerical amount. By simply advancing against an enemy in no condition to oppose any resistance to such an operation, Paris would be menaced, the pressure on Blucher removed, the circle of operations narrowed, and the Emperor at length compelled to fight for his dominions and crown, against the united force of both armies, under the very walls of his capital. To complete the reasons for vigorous hostilities, the negotiations for an armistice at Lusigny were broken off on the very day on which Troyes was retaken, Count Flahault's propositions on that subject being deemed wholly inadmissible by the Allied powers. The Emperor Alexander and Lord Castlereagh were indefatigable in

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March 4.
¹ Ploto, iii.
249, 251.
Koch, ii. 26,
29. Vaud.
ii. 91. 95.
Dan. 187,
188. Burgh.
175, 176.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
463, 465.

41.
Extraordi-
nary inac-
tivity of the
grand army
after these
successes.

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their efforts, after this period, to rouse the Austrian commander-in-chief to more active operations, so loudly called for, not more by the obvious advantage to be gained, than by the not less obvious danger to the army of Silesia to be averted by immediately commencing them.* But all their efforts were in vain; for the next fortnight, big, as we shall immediately see, with the most important events between the Aisne and the Marne, the grand army—full eighty thousand strong, even after the two corps sent to Lyons had been deducted, flushed with victory, within six days' march of the capital, with only thirty thousand enemies in its front—remained in a state of almost total inaction, leaving the destinies of Europe to hang on the swords, comparatively equally balanced, of Napoleon and Marshal Blücher!¹

¹ Koch, ii.
34, 35.
Plötho, iii.
251, 252.
Dan. 190.
Burgh. 176.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
472, 476.

42.
The diplomatic
caution
of the Aus-
trian cabinet,
from a wish
to save
Napoleon,
occasioned
this.

² Burgh. 176,
179. Koch,
ii. 34, 39.
Plötho, iii.
251, 258.
Dan. 190,
194. Die
Grosse Chron.
iii. 476, 481.

On the 5th, indeed, headquarters were advanced to Troyes; the French marshals retired, as Napoleon had done a month before, behind the Seine, and were posted at Bray, Nogent, and Montereau, with the headquarters at Provins; the victorious corps of Wrede, Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, and Wittgenstein, now under Raefskoi, were advanced to Sens, Nangis, and Pont-sur-Yonne; and the Russian reserves were brought up from Chaumont to the neighbourhood of Montierender. But in these positions they were kept wholly inactive till the 13th, when, in consequence of the great successes of the army of Silesia, a forward movement, though with the usual caution of Schwartzberg, was attempted. But the Austrian generalissimo is not responsible for this, on military principles, inexplicable delay. Diplomacy here, as so often during the war, restrained the soldiers' arms;² and the cabinet of Vienna, distracted between its desire to

* "The Emperor considers that the advance of the grand army to Sens is drawing us away from the enemy, and that it is therefore indispensable to direct all our forces to the right towards Arcis, between that town and Vitry; and, at all events, to reinforce them with the reserves, which should be ordered to move forward."—ALEXANDER to SCHWARTZENBERG, 8th March 1814. "In consequence of intelligence received from Field-Marshal Blücher, the Emperor considers it indispensable to begin to move by the right, between Arcis-sur-Aube and Vitry."—ALEXANDER to SCHWARTZENBERG, 11th March 1814.—"I hasten to communicate to your highness the reports received from Count St Priest. His majesty has charged me to inform you that, according to his opinion; it is now more necessary than ever to act on the offensive. Henceforth your hands will be completely unbound, and you may act according to military calculation."—VOLKONSKY, *Alexander's Aide-de-camp*, to SCHWARTZENBERG, 12th March 1814; DANILEFSKY, 194, 195.

reduce France to the frontiers of 1792, and yet to preserve the throne for the grandson of the Emperor Francis, still clung to the hope that, by delaying to bring matters to extremities, Napoleon might be brought to see his situation in its true light, and conclude a peace on such terms as might still leave his dynasty on the throne.

Very different, however, was the system of warfare which was pursued on the banks of the Aisne, where Blucher, with the iron bands of the army of Silesia, singly withstood the whole weight of Napoleon's power. No sooner did the veteran marshal receive intelligence of the Emperor's approach, than, with all imaginable expedition, he gathered together his forces, which now amounted to fifty-five thousand men,¹ and forthwith commenced his march across the Marne, the bridges of which he broke down, in the direction of Soissons. Napoleon, counting the moments in his impatience, urged on the advance of his troops from La Ferté-Gaucher; the soldiers, in high spirits and burning with ardour, gallantly seconded his efforts, and fifty thousand men, pressing on with ceaseless march, promised soon to bring on a fearful collision with the enemy. But it was too late. As the leading columns reached the heights above La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and the valley of the Marne lay at their feet, they beheld the rearguard of the army of Silesia vanishing in the distance on the other side of the Marne, the whole bridges of which were broken down. It was necessary to restore them before the pursuit could be renewed, and this required four-and-twenty hours. Headquarters, therefore, were established at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, and Napoleon in person repaired the following morning to the spot, to hasten the reconstruction of the bridges, at which the engineers laboured with such assiduity that the troops began to cross over on the evening of the same day. Meanwhile couriers were despatched to Paris to tranquillise the inhabitants, whom the cannonade at Meaux had thrown into the utmost consternation, with the joyful intelligence of the retreat of the Allies; while Blucher, who proposed to fight at Oulchy, on the right bank of the Ourcq, and had given orders to Winzingerode and Bulow to meet him there for that purpose, toiled on amidst dreadful rains,² and by deep cross roads rendered

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43.
Retreat of
Blucher to
Soissons.
March 2.

¹ Claus. vii.
419. Die
Grosse Chron.
iii. 384.

² Dan. 203,
204. Fain,
144, 147.
Koch, i. 368,
370. Plotho,
iii. 275, 281.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
553, 557.

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44.
Perilous
situation
of Blücher,
from Soissons
holding out.
March 2.

almost impassable by the sudden breaking up of the frost, to gain the appointed place of rendezvous.

It was not so easy a matter as the Prussian general supposed, for Bulow and Winzingerode to get across to Oulchy; for the only bridge over the Aisne, at this time flooded by the thaw, was at Soissons, and it was a fortified town held by a considerable French garrison. The justice of the *coup-d'œil* which had made Chernicheff some weeks before select it as the scene of his brilliant assault, was now manifest; but the whole fruits of that success had been lost, and the town regained to the enemy, from the retreat consequent on the disasters of Blücher's army. Bulow and Winzingerode, in obedience to the orders sent them from Bar-sur-Aube on the 25th, had united on the 2d near Soissons, on the opposite side of the river: their forces amounted to fifty thousand veterans, so that they would double the numerical strength of the army of Silesia. But Soissons held out, notwithstanding repeated summonses to surrender; the strength of its works, which had been considerably increased since Chernicheff's extraordinary *coup-de-main*, seemed to defy an immediate assault; and yet the situation of Blücher, on the opposite bank, with Marmont and Mortier pressing on his rear—with the former of whom his rearguard had that day a severe encounter, which cost him five hundred men—and Napoleon threatening his flank, was extremely perilous. In this emergency the Prussian marshal sent forward the pontoon train to Busancy on the Aisne, with the most experienced engineers in his army, to select points for throwing bridges across; but to attempt such an operation during the darkness of a winter night, with fifty thousand French, led by Napoleon, thundering in pursuit, was obviously attended with no common hazard.¹

In this dilemma, the Prussian marshal was delivered from his difficulties in a way so remarkable that it almost savoured of the marvellous. There were fifteen hundred Poles in Soissons, the brave but now inconsiderable remnant of the followers of Poniatowski, under the command of General Moreau.* They had received special orders from Napoleon to defend the place to the last drop of their blood, as the blocking up that issue to the army

* Not of course the great general of the same name, who fell at Dresden.

¹ Dan. 204,
205. Fain,
147, 149.
Koch, i. 373,
374. Plotho,
iii. 280, 283.

45.
Capitulation
of Soissons
extricates
him from his
difficulties.

of Silesia out of the country between the Marne and the Aisne, formed a part of the able plan which he had conceived for its destruction. The Allied generals had resolved to attempt to storm the place on the following morning; but during the night, under the pretence of purchasing some wine for the use of the generals, they sent an officer into the town to propose a capitulation. This skilful diplomatist, Colonel Lowernstown, having with some difficulty, and not without sustaining great danger from the sentries, who repeatedly fired upon him, contrived to make his way into the fortress, so worked upon the fears of the governor, by representing that two strong corps were prepared to assault the place on the following morning, and would infallibly put the whole garrison to the sword, that he prevailed on that officer and the council of war, whom he found assembled, to capitulate. Moreau proposed that the garrison should be allowed to take the guns, six in number, with them; and, after some feigned opposition on the part of Lowernstown, this was admitted. Winzingerode gladly acceded to the proposed terms; and it having been observed by some one present, that it was unusual to give an enemy, voluntarily evacuating a fortress, more than two guns, Woronzoff justly remarked—"that in the present circumstances, the surrender of Soissons was of such importance, that it would be even allowable to make the French commandant a present of some of our own guns, on the single condition of his evacuating the fortress on the instant." The capitulation was accordingly agreed to, and Woronzoff in person led his troops, immediately after, at noon on the 3d, to take possession of the city gates.¹

¹ Dan. 207,
209. Plutho,
iii. 283, 284.
Koch, i. 374,
376. Vaud.
ii. 15, 16.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
556, 558.

Napoleon expressed, as well he might, the utmost indignation at this disgraceful capitulation; the moment he received intelligence of it, he directed the governor, Moreau, to be forthwith delivered over to a military commission. The importance of the advantage thus gained to the Allies was soon apparent; for hardly were the city gates in possession of the Russians, when the sound of Marmont's and Mortier's cannon was heard thundering on Blucher's rearguard; and soon after the heads of his columns, weary and jaded, and in great confusion, began to arrive, and they defiled without intermission

46.
Junction of
Blucher's
army with
Winzingerode and
Bulow.

March 3.

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through the fortress all night. It may fairly be concluded, therefore, that the opportune surrender of Soissons saved the Prussian marshal, if not from total defeat, which the distance at which the great body of Napoleon's forces still were rendered improbable, at least from most serious embarrassment and loss in crossing the river. On the day following, the whole army passed over in safety, and effected its junction with Bulow and Winzingerode's men, on the summit of the plateau overlooking Soissons, on the road to Laon. The veterans of the Silesian army, almost worn out with two months' incessant marching and six weeks of active hostilities, with hardly any shoes on their feet, tattered greatcoats on their backs, and almost empty caissons, presented a striking contrast to the splendid array, untarnished uniforms, and well-replenished artillery and baggage-waggon of Bernadotte's corps. This important junction raised the strength of the united army to a hundred thousand men, of whom twenty-four thousand were admirable horse; and infantry and cavalry alike were tried veteran troops, well known in the preceding campaign on the Elbe. Blucher resolved no longer to retreat, but to give battle on the summit of the elevated plateaus which lie between the Aisne and the Marne, adjacent to the highway from Soissons to Laon.¹

¹ Vaud. ii.
17, 25.
Koch, i. 376,
379. Dan.
210, 211.
Ploto, iii.
285. Claus.
vii. 437.

47.
Napoleon's
decrees calling on the
French
people to rise
en masse.
March 5.

And now an event occurred which throws an important light on the moral government of the world, and illustrates the inexpediency, even for present interests, of those deviations from the rules of justice and humanity, which it is the highest glory of civilisation to have in general introduced into the ruthless code of war. Irritated at the escape of the army of Silesia from the well-laid scheme which he had devised for its destruction, and anxious to engage the masses of the people, hitherto passive and inert in the midst of the hostile armies, in a guerilla warfare on the flanks and rear of the invaders, Napoleon issued two proclamations from Fismes, by the first of which he not only authorised, but enjoined, every Frenchman to take up arms, and fall on the flanks and rear of the invading armies; while, by the second, the penalties of treason were denounced against every mayor or public functionary who should not stimulate, to the utmost of his power, the prescribed insurrectionary

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movements on the part of the people.* Thus was Napoleon himself driven, by a just retribution, and the consequences of the atrocious system of universal invasion and systematic oppression which the Revolutionary armies had so long pursued, to adopt the very same measures of defence which he had so often denounced in his enemies, and for obeying which he had, in sullen revenge, shed so much noble and heroic blood.¹

¹ *Moniteur*,
March 6,
1814.

The guerilla warfare to which he now called the French, and which of course led to severe and sanguinary proclamations, in reprisal, by the Allied generals, was no other than the very system for pursuing which he had, in the outset of his career, shot the magistrates and principal citizens of Pavia in cold blood, and given up that beautiful city to pillage;† and to repress which he had sanctioned the bloody proclamations of Soult² and Augereau,³ denouncing the punishment of death against every Spanish peasant found in arms in defence of his country; and the still more infamous decree of Bessières, affixing the same penalty, not only to the people not soldiers taken in arms, but “against the *fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, children, and nephews*, of all individuals who have quitted their domiciles, and do not inhabit the villages occupied by the French.”⁴ Impelled by stern necessity, the mighty conqueror was now obliged to sign with his own hand the condemnation of his previous cruelty; to canonise the memory of the many brave men whom he had doomed to death for doing what he now enjoined; to expose to similar suffering the people who had been the instruments and sharers in his oppression. Providence has a clear mode of dealing with the sins of men, which is, to leave them to the consequences of their own iniquities.

48.

Which was
the very
thing he had
so often de-
nounced in
his enemies.

² May 9,
1810.

³ Dec. 28,
1809.

⁴ June 6,
1811.

Determined to come to blows with the army of Silesia,

* “All the French citizens are not only authorised to take up arms, *but required to do so*; to sound the tocsin as soon as they hear the cannon of our troops approaching them: to assemble together, scour the woods, break down the bridges, block up the roads, and fall on the flanks and rear of the enemy. Every French citizen taken by the enemy, who shall be put to death, shall be forthwith avenged, by the shooting of a prisoner from the enemy.—NAPOLEON.” “All the mayors, public functionaries, and inhabitants, who, instead of stimulating the patriotic ardour of the people, shall strive to cool them, and dissuade them from all the measures of a legitimate defence, shall be *considered as traitors, and treated as such*.”—NAPOLEON, *5th March 1814. Moniteur*, March 6, 1814; and GOLDSMITH’S *Recueil*, vi. 645.

† *Ante*, Chap. xx. § 85.

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49.

Napoleon
crosses the
Aisne, and
follows
Blucher to
Craone.

March 5.

notwithstanding the great accession of strength which it had just received, in the hopes that he might disable it for a time, at least, from resuming the offensive, while he turned his strength against the vast but unwieldy masses of the grand army, Napoleon gave orders for a general advance. With this view, General Corbineau, with a considerable body, was detached in the night of the 4th from Fismes to Rheims, of which he took possession without resistance on the day following; and on the same day the advanced guard was pushed on to Bery-au-Bac, where the cross road from Rheims to Laon passes the Aisne, by a bridge recently constructed. The whole army was immediately moved in that direction; and Nansouty, having fallen in with the rearguard of the enemy, drove it back to Corbeny with some loss. As soon as the passage of the Aisne was fully effected, couriers were despatched to Mezières, Verdun, and Metz, with instructions to stimulate the authorities to rouse the peasantry; but though the latter in many places showed a disposition to rise in obedience to the Emperor's proclamations, and not unfrequently fell upon the detached parties of the Allies with hardly any leaders, yet the former, foreseeing his approaching end, hardly ever made the slightest attempt either to direct or encourage their efforts. Meanwhile, the army approached Laon, by the road from Bery-au-Bac, to the ground where Marshal Blucher had taken post on the plateau of CRAONE, on the narrow neck of land which extends from the road from Soissons to Laon, to which the enemy were now advancing from Bery-au-Bac to the same town.¹

¹ Koch, i.
388, 391.
Dan. 217.
Fain, 154,
155. Die
Grosse Chron.
iii. 564, 565.

50.

Description
of the field of
battle.

The position thus chosen was a plateau nearly a mile and a half long, but not half a mile broad, bounded on either flank by steep slopes leading down to the ravines of Foulon and Ailles, the sides of which, difficult of ascent to infantry, were wholly impracticable for cavalry or artillery. The river Lette flowed nearly in a straight line, in the bottom of the ravine, to the north; at the distance of a mile from the southern edge of the plateau, the Aisne ran in a deep, and nearly parallel channel, from east to west; but the immediate declivities of the position were drained by a multitude of feeders, which flowed rapidly down at right angles to the central bed of these

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two streams. A cross gully of no great depth, but a most formidable obstacle on a field of battle, extended at right angles to the ravines, along the front of that part of the plateau which Woronzoff chose for his first stand; and two others of irregular forms, running each halfway across it, afforded, like so many bastions and ditches, positions of considerable strength in rear. The upper part of the hollows on either side was filled with woods; that of Vaclere lying to the north, and the Bois de Blanc Sablon to the south, neither of which was pervious to cavalry or artillery. The neck of the plateau, and the strength of the position, was across it from Ailles to Paissy, and at that point it was little more than five hundred yards broad—a narrow space for a battle to be fought on which the fate of France, and perhaps of Europe, would depend.¹

It was far from being his whole army, however, which Blucher had assembled in this strong position. His situation was full of difficulty, especially considering the sudden and desperate strokes which his antagonist was wont to deliver, the admirable quality of the troops at his command, and the variety of points he himself was called on to defend. It was necessary, in case of disaster, and for the sake of his communications, to cover Laon, the bulwark of the roads to the Netherlands; to defend the central position at Craone, and, at the same time, to keep possession of the important fortress of Soissons, commanding the principal passage of the Aisne, and the great road to Paris, the object of all his efforts. This last stronghold, forming the extreme right of his line, was now threatened with immediate assault by Marmont and Mortier, to whom Napoleon had given peremptory orders instantly to carry it at all hazards. To provide at once for these different objects, and at the same time carry into effect his intention of giving battle to the French Emperor, the following dispositions were made by Marshal Blucher:—Bulow, with his whole corps, was sent off to defend Laon: the infantry of Winzingerode, under Woronzoff and Strogonoff, were charged with the defence of the plateau of Craone;² while Winzingerode, at the head of ten thousand horse, and sixty pieces of horse-artillery, followed by Kleist and Langeron, was to pass

¹ Personal observation. Koch, i. 389, 390. Vaud. ii. 31, 32. Plottho, iii. 288, 289. Beauch. i. 395.

² 51. Blucher's dispositions.

² Koch, i. 386, 387. Dan. 218. Plottho, iii. 290.

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the Lette, and by cross roads fall on the right wing or rear of the French, while actively engaged on the plateau in front. York was posted on the highway between Soissons and Laon, to afford succour to any point which might require it; and the defence of Soissons was intrusted to Radzewitz, with six thousand men of Langeron's corps.

52.

Unsuccessful
assault on
Soissons.
March 5.

The first attack was made on this important fortress, the loss of which had been the subject of such unbounded mortification to the Emperor. At daylight on the morning of the 5th, the enemy's troops were seen approaching, in deep columns, by the road of Chateau-Thierry. Radzewitz immediately made his preparations, and rode round the ranks, reminding his men of what they owed to their sovereign and the honour of the Russian arms. At seven, the enemy commenced the attack on the faubourgs, but they were repulsed with loss. Returning, however, to the charge, they made themselves masters of a considerable part of the houses beyond the walls, and a desperate action, within pistol-shot, ensued in the streets, near to the foot of the ramparts, which was maintained with the greatest resolution on both sides. Transported with ardour, the French, in many places, unroofed the houses of which they had made themselves masters, hoisted up their guns, with ropes, on the outside, to the topmost story, and from thence, as from the moving towers of antiquity, battered the summit of the walls, nearly on an equal footing. But it was all in vain. The Russian grenadiers, with heroic resolution, made good their post against their gallant antagonists, threefold more numerous than themselves; the guns on the bastions maintained their superiority over those of the enemy, somewhat below them, in the suburbs; and after the whole day had been consumed, and fifteen hundred men lost to either side in this furious assault, the French marshal drew off, leaving Radzewitz in possession of the bloodstained ramparts.¹

¹ Dan. 215.
217. Beauch.
i. 391, 392.
Vaud. i. 27.
Plotoh, iii.
286. Die
Grosse Chron.
iii. 566, 569.
Velter, ii. 152.

53.

Napoleon's
dispositions,

Disappointed in his hopes of turning the Allied position by carrying Soissons on its right flank, Napoleon now resolved to hazard a direct attack upon the plateau in its front. Had his army been composed of the soldiers of Arcola or Rivoli, he would have formed his troops into a dense column, and assaulted the Russians on the neck of

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the narrow tongue of land, as his grenadiers had forced the dykes in the swampy plains of Verona. But, excepting the divisions Friant and Christiani of the Old Guard, with the cuirassiers, they were of a very different description, being in great part conscripts and young troops, almost worn out with the incredible efforts they had already made in the campaign; and who were not always to be relied on except in the presence of the Emperor. In consequence of this, Napoleon felt the necessity of supplying by combination what was wanting in strength; and with this view he made the following dispositions:—Ney was charged with the principal attack, which was to be directed against the enemy's right flank, upwards from the slope descending to the valley of the Lette, and he had under his command part of Victor's corps and the dragoons of the Guard; while Nansouty, with the Polish dragoons and Excelmans' division, was to climb the steep on the left of the enemy, from the side of Oulchy and the feeders of the Aisne. The main attack along the neck of the plateau, led by Victor, at the head of the infantry of the Guard, was under the direction of Napoleon in person; and by bringing up column after column on that narrow plain, he hoped to force the position, despite its natural advantages, when the heads of his columns showed themselves on either flank. His force actually on the field, and engaged with the enemy, amounted to forty thousand men; the Russians were only twenty-seven thousand; but they had the advantage of a very strong position, had not been exhausted by previous combats in the campaign, and were the very flower of the Russian army. By a singular chance, the result of the previous movements which had taken place, both parties had passed each other, and now wheeled about to fight: the Russians with their face to the Rhine, the French with theirs towards Paris.¹

¹ Dan, 219.
222. Koch, i.
389, 391.
Vaud. i. 31,
34. Plotho,
iii. 289, 290.
Kausler, 398,
399. Die
Grosse
Chron. iii.
570, 571.

Soon after nine o'clock on the morning of the 7th, two of the enemy's columns appeared on the front of the plateau towards Craone, while a third, without guns, entered the ravine on the left. Blucher at the same time received intelligence that Winzingerode's corps of horse-artillery and cannon, which was destined to turn the French flank, and execute the decisive attack, so far from

54.
Commence-
ment of the
battle.

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having yet reached Feticux, its place of destination, was still far in the rear, from having been impeded by the excessive badness of the roads. He instantly ordered Kleist's men to take the start of Winzingerode, and press on direct for that place; while he himself set out in person after Winzingerode, to endeavour to overcome the difficulties which impeded him, leaving Sacken on the neck of land to combat Napoleon. The French forces, preceded by a hundred guns, soon approached in dense masses along the plateau. Shortly the fire of artillery became extremely violent on both sides; for the Russian cannon, consisting of sixty pieces, was admirably posted, and kept up a dreadful discharge, with unerring precision, both in front and flank, on the deep French columns advancing along the neck of the plateau. Napoleon's guns, greatly superior in number, but by no means so advantageously placed, replied with the utmost vigour: their shot, admirably directed, ploughed through the Russian masses, which, drawn up in three lines, almost close together, presented an infallible mark to the gunners. Not a piece was fired without producing a corresponding chasm in the opposite ranks. But nothing could shake the firmness of Woronzoff's troops: whole files were mown down, but the men never wavered, and with the steadiness which discipline superadded to native courage alone can give, calmly fronted the tempest of death in obedience to their Czar and their oaths. At length the attacking columns recoiled in this fearful strife, and Victor's troops, after sustaining a dreadful loss, withdrew beyond reach of the fire.¹

¹ Kausler, 400. Dan. 223, 224. Koch, i. 391, 392. Vaud. ii. 32, 33. Plötho, iii. 239, 290.

55. Desperate action on the plateau, which at length ends in the Russians retreating.

Meanwhile Ney, on the Russian left, no sooner heard the cannon-shot on the crest of the plateau, than, transported with ardour, he redoubled the vigour of his attack. The hamlet of Ailles was carried after hard fighting; and his tirailleurs, driving the Russian light troops before them, were seen climbing the steep on the left of the plateau. At the same time an attempt was made by Nansouty, with six battalions of infantry, to mount the summit on the right from the side of Oulchy. The depth, however, of the ravine on that flank, the badness of the roads, and the well-directed fire of six guns planted on the edge of the plateau, at the top of

the declivity, rendered the attack abortive. But no sooner did the Emperor perceive Ney's vanguard appearing on the summit, than he ordered Victor to advance again in a heavy close column along the neck of the position. With such vigour did this column rush forward, supported by Ney's men on their right, in spite of the fire of forty-eight guns on their front and flank, that one of the Russian batteries on the left was carried. It was only a few minutes in the enemy's possession, for the 19th light infantry, and regiment of Shirvan, rushed forward and retook it with the bayonet, hurling the French with loud shouts down the steeps. But the extreme rapidity and violence of the fire now caused, after four hours' fighting, a want of ammunition to be felt in the Russian lines; and Sacken, alarmed by the increasing masses of the French, especially in the valley on his left, and the non-appearance of Blucher or Winzingerode in the rear, where they had been expected, twice sent orders to Woronzoff to retreat. The brave Russian, however, finding he could still make good his post, and wisely judging that he ran less danger by standing still in his strong position and continuing the contest, than by retreating in face of such a force as Napoleon commanded, still maintained his ground. But at length Sacken, having received instructions from Blucher to fall back with all his forces to the central position at Laon, gave Woronzoff positive orders to retreat.¹

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¹ Dan. 223,
224. Koch, i.
393, 396.
Kausler, 400.
Plötho, iii.
290. Vaud.
ii. 33, 35.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
575, 576.

It was at two o'clock in the afternoon that this hazardous movement commenced. Woronzoff formed his men with admirable steadiness, even under the fire of a hundred French guns, in squares, and ordered the retreat in ordinary time by alternate bodies; the artillery in the openings, and the dismounted guns, two-and-twenty in number, with such of the wounded as could be removed, in front of the retreating column. As soon as Napoleon perceived the retreat commencing, he hurried forward all his guns to his own front, redoubled his fire upon the retiring column, and ordered up the whole dragoons and cuirassiers to charge along the neck of the plateau. So vehement was their onset, so loud the cries and clatter of the rushing horsemen, that it was at first thought all was lost on the right; but when the smoke cleared away, the

56.
Glorious retreat of the Russians.

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steady squares were seen pursuing their march unbroken; and Benkendorff, with the hussars and Cossacks, bravely charged the French horse, and checked the pursuit. As the retreat continued, and the Russians came past the neck to a wider part of the plateau, the danger became greater, because the more extended surface of the level ground enabled the French cavalry to turn their flanks. At this critical moment, however, Wassiltchikoff came up with Lanskoy's hussars and Dochakoff's dragoons of Sacken's corps. These incomparable troops instantly charged the pursuing horse, and drove them back in their turn. So narrow was the ground in some places, that the horse were obliged to halt and open out, in order to let the infantry and guns through; and instantly closing when they had passed, faced about against the pursuers. Several of the Russian regiments of cavalry charged in this manner, in less than an hour, eight different times.¹

¹ Dan. 225, 226. Kausler, 400. Vaud. i. 35, 37. Koch, i. 394, 396. Plottho, iii. 290, 291.

57.
Strong position taken up by the Russians in the rear.

Meanwhile the Russian troops were approaching the second neck of the plateau, in the rear both of the former and of the wider space between them; and while the cavalry retarded the advance of the enemy, the whole guns of Sacken's and Woronzoff's corps which were not dismounted, sixty-four in number, were placed upon it. The ground was singularly calculated to give efficiency to their fire; for it was at once flanked on either side by perpendicular rocks which could not be scaled, and rose by a steep slope in the narrow isthmus between them, so as to afford the means of placing the cannon in a double row, one behind and the other above, in such a manner that, like the upper and under decks of a ship at sea, they could both discharge at the same time. On this slope the guns were placed; thirty-six in the first line, twenty-eight in the second, opposite to the intervals between the first, and about twenty feet above them. When every thing was in readiness, the infantry were marching back slowly, and with perfect regularity, abreast of the first line of guns, when they faced about and dressed in a line with the mouths of the pieces; while the cavalry, now almost worn out, rapidly withdrew to the right and left, and retired behind the artillery.²

² Kausler, 401. Dan. 226, 227. Vaud. i. 35. Koch, i. 399. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 578, 579.

Great was the astonishment of the French when the screen of horsemen cleared away, and they beheld this

close mass of enemies ready to receive them. They were nothing daunted, however, by the sight. Drouot formed the terrible artillery of the Guard in front of this second position, and calmly moved on in the midst of the guns, on foot, as he was wont, against the double tier of cannon, sometimes aiding in the pointing of a gun as in the days of his youth at the military college. Immediately behind him the lofty grenadier caps of the Imperial Guard were seen in dense and formidable array.* But all their efforts were in vain. With dauntless intrepidity, indeed, the Old Guard continued to press on along the narrow ridge; but the thicker their columns became the greater was the havoc, until their advance was literally impeded by the heaps of dead and dying. The Russian artillery, worked with extraordinary rapidity, fired, by alternate guns, round shot and grape from the first line, and round shot and grenades from the second; and such was the precision of their aim, that the assailants never succeeded, notwithstanding the most heroic efforts, in passing the dreadful strait. This awful cannonade lasted only twenty minutes; when Drouot, finding the position unassailable, drew off his guns, and the fire ceased. Soon after, Woronzoff, having by this stand gained time for his cavalry, wounded, and carriages, to reach the great road from Soissons, himself followed with the rearguard, to which the garrison of the former town was joined, and the whole fell back to the environs of Laon.¹

Such was the terrible battle of Craone, the most obstinately contested, if we except Albuera and Culm, of the whole Revolutionary war, and in which it is hard to say to which side of the heroic antagonists the palm of victory is to be awarded. The French were greatly superior in number; for as Sacken's infantry was never engaged, nor even in sight, the whole troops who fought on the Russian side did not exceed twenty-one thousand; while Napoleon had nearly thirty thousand actually under fire.† But this disproportion, great as it was, appears to have been

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58.

In the assault
of which the
French are
repulsed.

1 Dan. 226,
228. Kausler,
401. Plotho,
iii. 290, 291.
Koch, i. 399,
401. Vaud. i.
35, 37. Die
Grosse
Chron. iii.
578, 579, 584.

59.

Results of
the battle.

“ * Non content d'appuyer ainsi le mouvement du General Boyer, le Comte Drouot, mettant pied à terre, vint utiliser son artillerie, en montrant aux canoniers la manière de charger et de pointer avec autant de douceur et de calme que s'il eut été au polygone.”—Koch, i. 394.

	Infantry.	Cavalry	Total.
† Russians under fire, - - -	16,304 - -	4,900	21,204
French ditto, - - -	23,073 - -	6,350	9,423

—Koch, i. 391; and Die Grosse Chron. iii. 575, 577.

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counterbalanced in the result by the incomparable strength of Woronzoff's position, which rendered numerical superiority of little avail, and the admirable disposition of his guns, which, both at the commencement and close of the action, gave the Russian artillery, though inferior in number, a decided advantage over that of the French. Trophies of victory there were none to boast of by either party. The French won the field of battle, but it was covered only with the dead or the dying: no prisoners were made, or cannon or standards taken, on either side; and the field itself was yielded, not to the attacks, impetuous as they were, of Napoleon's grenadiers, but to the general policy of the campaign, which, after Winzingerode's circular march against the French rear had failed, induced the Prussian field-marshal to direct a general concentration of his forces in the noble position of Laon. The loss on both sides was enormous; and, save at Albuera, unprecedented in proportion to the number of troops engaged in the whole war. The Russians were weakened by five thousand killed and wounded; but on the side of the French no less than eight thousand brave men, being more than a fourth of the troops engaged, had fallen. Woronzoff deservedly had the order of St George, of the second class, immediately conferred upon him by a grateful sovereign: wounds and death were the only returns which now remained for French deeds of heroism. Victor was severely lacerated by a cannon-ball in the thigh; Grouchy, Nansouty, Boyer, and two others, more slightly.¹

Had Winzingerode's attack, supported by Kleist, in the rear, not been prevented from taking place by the extraordinary difficulties which impeded his march, Napoleon's career would, in all probability, have been terminated at Craone, as it afterwards was at Waterloo. His last reserves had been engaged on the plateau; he had no troops in hand to oppose to any fresh attack; and the apparition in his rear of ten thousand horse, followed by Kleist and Langeron's corps, would have proved fatal. It cannot be denied that Blucher erred egregiously in dispersing his army so much before the battle; and that, considering that his forces, upon the whole, were double those of his antagonist, it afforded the most decisive proof of his having been out-generaled, or singularly ill used by fortune, that, at the decisive point, the French so far

¹ Die Grosse Chron. iii. 586. Koch. i. 401, 402. Kausler, 401. Dan. 229. Fain, 158. Vaud. ii. 37. Claus. vii. 440.

60.
Reflections on this battle, and the extraordinary gallantry displayed.

outnumbered his troops engaged. Proportionally greater was the credit due to the heroism of Woronzoff and his unconquerable soldiers, who overcame all these obstacles, and contended on equal terms, during the whole day, against Napoleon, at the head of such superior forces, including his redoubtable Guards and cuirassiers. Innumerable were the deeds of heroism performed by officers and men on both sides : Ney, Mortier, and Victor, combated on foot at the head of their troops, and were always to be seen in the thickest of the fire, animating the troops by their voice and example : Woronzoff repeatedly, during the retreat, threw himself into the squares, and in person gave the word of command to fire, when the French had come within fifty paces : Major-general Poncet, severely wounded, stood before his brigade on crutches, and positively refused to retire till the line was directed to fall back : the regiment of Shirvan having exhausted their cartridges, and being surrounded by the French cavalry, thrice forced their way through with fixed bayonets, bringing with them their dead colonel, and all the officers who had been either killed or wounded : Dochakoff, on being mortally wounded, exclaimed to his regiment, "Halt, Courlanders !" and breathed his last.¹

While the cavalry were on the road to Laon, Napoleon traversed in the gloom of the evening the blood-stained summit of the plateau, and then descended into the valley of the Aisne, to seek a hamlet wherein to pass the night, and found it in the village of Bray. His spirits were unusually depressed, as well by the bloody and unsatisfactory issue of the action, as by the intelligence which he received the same evening from Chatillon, announcing the firm determination of the Allies to break up the conference, unless the fundamental principle of reducing France to its ancient limits was agreed to. The Emperor was not prepared for such unanimity on the part of the Allied plenipotentiaries ; he still clung to the hope that Austria would break off. He refused, however, to yield to those terms, and a messenger was despatched with instructions to Caulaincourt to present a counter project, and strive to gain time. "I see clearly," said he, "that this war is an abyss, but I will be the last to bury myself in it. If we must wear the fetters, it is not I who will stretch out my hands to receive them." He was deeply

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¹ Dan. 229,
232. Koch,
i. 301, 302.
Claus. vii.
440.

61.
Napoleon on
the night suc-
ceeding the
battle.

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¹ Fain, 159,
161. Koch, i
401, 403.
Dan. 235.

depressed, however, by the issue of the action, and wrote that night to Joseph at Paris—"The Old Guard alone stood firm ; the rest melted like snow." Such was his irritation from the desperate state of his affairs, that he gave orders, in one of his fits of fury, to shoot some Russian prisoners, probably in retaliation for some peasants slain, which command, before he relented, was unhappily carried into execution at the village of Vaurains.¹

62.
Both parties
take post at
and around
Laon.

On the following day, Blucher collected all his six corps round the splendid position of Laon. So exhausted were the French by their efforts during the battle, that they did not move from their ground till ten next day ; and as the Russians marched the whole night, they got the start of the enemy, and reached the neighbourhood of that town in safety. Napoleon also on his side collected his whole forces, which now amounted to about forty-eight thousand men. Marmont, who was ordered up from Soissons, crossed the Aisne at Bery-au-Bac, and, after sleeping at Corbeny, approached Laon by the road of Rheims ; while the bulk of the army, consisting of the corps of Ney and Mortier, with the cuirassiers and reserve cavalry, after having joined the great road from Soissons to Laon at Chavignon and Vaurains, approached on the *chaussée* from Paris. Notwithstanding all his losses, Blucher had still nearly ninety thousand men grouped around the hill of Laon ; and the approach to the position was by a defile two miles in length, where the road crosses a marsh that runs up to the foot of the hill. Chernicheff was posted at Etouville, which lay at the entrance of this defile, with four regiments of infantry and twenty-four guns ; and he defended himself so vigorously against the impetuous attacks of Marshal Ney, who commanded the French advanced guard, that at nightfall he was still unable to make any impression. After it was dark, however, the peasants conducted the Old Guard through by-paths across the marshes, so that at day-break on the 9th Chernicheff found his post at the entrance of the defile no longer tenable, and withdrew with all his forces to the position of Laon. There, soon after, Radzewitz arrived with the garrison of Soissons, having by forced marches and extraordinary vigilance eluded all the efforts of the enemy to intercept him.² The accession of these forces, and the general concentration of his

² Dan. 236,
238. Kausler,
402. Fain,
161, 162.
Koch, i. 408,
411. Plottho,
iii. 292, 293.
Vaud. i. 42,
44. Varnh.
von Ense,
401. Die
Grosse
Chron. iii.
592, 593.

troops, raised Blucher's army to one hundred and four thousand men, including twenty-four thousand horse, and two hundred and sixty guns, all concentrated and supporting each other : while Napoleon, including Marmont, had only fifty-two thousand, of whom not more than fourteen thousand were cavalry.

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LAON is a town of great antiquity, containing seven thousand souls, well known to travellers in that part of France. Like that of Cassel on the borders of Flanders, it stands upon the flat summit of a conical hill about three quarters of a mile in breadth, and elevated nearly two hundred and fifty feet above the adjacent plain. It is surrounded by irregular ancient walls and towers, standing on the edge of the lofty plateau as it sinks into the declivity, and following its varied sinuosities. Gardens, orchards, and grass fields, lie on the slopes of this huge truncated cone ; the roads leading to the town ascend by a gentle slope up the long acclivity : the houses at the foot, fronting the highways and villages adjacent, were all loopholed, and filled with musketeers ; a hundred pieces of cannon crowded the ramparts on the summit, while numerous other batteries crowned every commanding eminence in the adjoining slopes. On these slopes, and in the neighbouring villages, lay the immense host of the Allied army, having the town for a vast redoubt in its centre, and extending with its wings far into the plain on either side. On the right lay Winzingerode's men, drawn up in two lines near Aven ; in the centre, Bulow's corps occupied the hill of Laon, the villages of Semilly and Ardon, with the abbey of St Vincent at its foot, and manned the numerous batteries disposed around its slopes. On the left those of Kleist and York extended from Laon to Chambry, opposite to Athies, and stretched far into the plain on the road leading to Rheims. Sacken's and Langeron's troops, which had suffered so severely in the preceding combats, were in reserve behind Laon. The positions of the French, being fewer in number, were much more concentrated. Marmont was expected on the right, being ordered to come up by the road from Rheims to a spot assigned between Chambry and Athies in the level plain : Mortier, with the Guards, and the whole reserve cavalry under Grouchy and Nansouty, were in the centre ;¹ opposite Laon, in front of them, half way

63.
Description
of the position
of Laon, and
that of the
Allied army.

¹ Personal
observation.
Kausler, 403,
404. Koch, i.
407, 408.
Beauch. i.
404, 405.

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64.
Sublime
spectacle
from the
ramparts
of Laon.
March 8.

to Semilly and Ardon, was Ney with his indefatigable corps, yet reeking with the blood of Craone.

It was a sublime and yet animating sight, when, on the evening of the 8th March, the Allied army withdrew on all sides into the vicinity of this ancient and celebrated town. To the anxious and trembling crowds of citizens, and peasants driven in from the adjacent country which had been the theatre of hostilities, the horizon to the south and west appeared covered by innumerable fires; loud discharges of cannon rolled on all sides, and sensibly approached the town; long lines of light, proceeding from the fire of the infantry of the Allies as they retired, or of the French as they advanced, were distinctly seen as the shades of evening set in. When night approached, and darkness overspread the plain, a still more extraordinary spectacle presented itself. The continued discharges in the midst of the thickets and woods, with which the country abounded, produced a strange optical delusion, which converted the trees into so many electrical tubes, from the summits of which sparks and dazzling light, as from so many fireworks, appeared to rush upwards into the heavens. In the midst of this lurid illumination, long lines of infantry, dark masses of cavalry, and endless files of artillery, were seen covering the plain in all directions, till they were lost in the obscurity of distance.¹

1 Temoin
Oculaire, in
Beauch. i.
405.65.
Combat on
the first day
until Mar-
mont arrives.
March 9.

The succeeding day, being the 9th, was passed without any serious action on either side. - Approached to the villages of Clacy, Semilly, and Ardon, at the foot of the hill of Laon, the centre and left, composed of the troops under Napoleon in person, were perfectly prepared for an attack. But he was justly unwilling to hazard a general engagement until his right wing, under Marmont, came up to its ground from the side of Rheims; and repeatedly in the course of the day he despatched messengers in that direction, to learn where the marshal was, and how soon he might be expected in the field. Meanwhile, in order to feel the strength of the enemy's position, Ney was ordered to advance right against Laon by the great road from Soissons. Favoured by a thick fog, which entirely enveloped the hill of Laon, and concealed his advance from the enemy, he succeeded, by a sudden attack, in making himself master of the villages of Semilly and Ardon at the foot of the hill, and was only prevented

from pushing up its slopes by the concentric fire of the batteries, which commanded every approach to the town. At eleven the mist cleared away, and the whole field of battle became visible from the ramparts. Blucher, perceiving how inconsiderable were the forces opposed to him in the centre, resolved to resume the offensive, and drive the enemy from the villages he had won at the foot of the hill. With this view, while Woronzoff's infantry were ordered to attack Semilly in front, and Bulow's at Ardon, a division of infantry, supported by all Winzingerode's cavalry, was directed to make a sweep in the plain, and turn their left. This double attack entirely succeeded; and Ney's corps were driven back across the *chaussée* and marshes towards Etouville, in such disorder, that it was only by charging with the Imperial Guard and reserve cavalry, that that marshal and Beliard succeeded in arresting the pursuit of the Allies, and driving them back to the bottom of the hill. At four in the afternoon, Napoleon having learned that Marmont had come up to his ground on the right, towards Athies on the road to Rheims, brought forward his Guards and cuirassiers, by a vigorous advance again expelled the Allies from Ardon, and carried, after a bloody struggle, the village of Clacy and the abbey of St Vincent from the Russians on their right.¹

Neither party, however, were intent on these attacks; both fought only to gain time. Napoleon was counting the minutes, till the announcement of the approach of Marmont warned him that he might with safety commence a real attack upon the enemy at once in front and flank; while Blucher, having received intelligence of the French marshal being expected on the road to Rheims from Laon, was taking measures to fall upon and crush him when he was totally unsupported by the remainder of the army. Meanwhile Marmont, who had begun his march early in the morning from Bery-au-Bac, issued at one in the afternoon from the defile of Fetioux, and, driving the Prussian videttes before him, commenced an attack at four o'clock on a division of York's infantry, which was stationed at Athies, and after a fierce combat the Prussians were driven out of the village, which became a prey to the flames. Blucher now clearly perceived, from

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1 Kausler,
405, 406.
Koch, i. 409,
411. Dan.
239, 240.
Vaud, ii. 45,
46. Plotio,
iii. 494, 495.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
593, 596.

66.

Arrival of
Marmont,
and Blucher's
measures to
overwhelm
him.

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the vivacity of this assault, that the principal effort of the enemy was to be made in that direction. He saw that Napoleon's design was to amuse him by false attacks in front on the Soissons road, and meanwhile turn his flank, cut him off from all communication with the grand army, and throw him back on a separate field of operations on the side of Flanders. He immediately took measures to defeat this project, and convert it into the means of the enemy's ruin ; and for this object his central position at Laon, midway as it were between the two wings of the French army, presented extraordinary advantages. Langeron and Sacken were moved up behind Laon to the left, so as to be in a condition to support York: Kleist was ordered up to the front, close in his rear : the horse-artillery of the army of Silesia was moved to the extreme left, so as to be ready to commence the attack: the infantry were all arranged in close columns, the cavalry in dense array of squadrons ; and the whole received orders to advance, as soon as it was dark, in double quick time, and without firing a shot or uttering a word, against the enemy.¹

¹ Dan. 240,
241. Koch,
i. 414. Vaud.
ii. 48, 50.
Ploto, iii.
294, 295.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
660, 662.

67.
Nocturnal
surprise and
defeat of
Marmont.

Meanwhile Marmont's troops, worn out with fatigue, and wholly unconscious of their danger, had sunk to sleep in their frigid bivouacs. At the dead of night, and in perfect silence, the Prussians advanced to the attack: Prince William of Prussia led the infantry, which were headed by the brigades of Horn and Klux, and moved by the high-road right on Athies. The fields on either side were filled with the remainder of Kleist's corps, all in close column, so as to occupy very little room ; while Ziethen's turned the right flank of the enemy, and drove them back on the infantry. Both attacks proved entirely successful. So complete was the surprise, so universal the consternation, that the French merely fired one round of grape on the approach of Prince William, and then dispersed, every one flying in the profound darkness whither chance or his fears directed. Ziethen's horse at the same instant falling on the right, increased the confusion: the fugitives from these two attacks, flying at right angles to each other, soon got intermingled, and poured headlong out in frightful disorder on the road to Bery-au-Bac ; while the Prussian infantry, pressing on through the

throng with loud shouts, soon arrived at the grand park and reserve caissons, all of which, with the exception of a few pieces, were taken. The Prussian hussars, highly elated with their success, continued the pursuit without intermission, and the darkness of the night alone prevented the whole corps being made prisoners. In wild confusion, horse, foot, and the few cannon which had escaped hurried through the defile of Fétieux, six miles off, at the entrance of which Colonel Fabvier contrived to rally a few hundred men, who, from the smallness of their number not being perceived in the darkness of the night, contrived to stop the pursuit. As it was, however, Marmont lost forty pieces of cannon, a hundred and thirty-one caissons, and two thousand five hundred prisoners. The number of killed and wounded, from the rapidity of the flight, was not considerable; but his corps was totally dispersed, and disabled from taking any part, till reorganised, in any military operation. The whole loss of the Allies was not three hundred men.¹

Napoleon, anticipating a general battle, was drawing on his boots at four o'clock in the morning of the 10th, with his horse already at the door, when two dragoons, who had just arrived on foot in great consternation, were brought to him. They stated that they had escaped by a miracle from a nocturnal hurrah which the enemy had made on the bivouacs of Marmont; that the marshal himself was killed or taken, and that all was lost on that side. He immediately gave orders to suspend the preparations for a general attack, which were already commencing; and soon after, more authentic intelligence of the disaster arrived, to the effect that the marshal was neither killed nor taken, but that his corps was entirely dispersed, its artillery lost, and the fugitives, in disorder, were only beginning to rally in the neighbourhood of Fismes. The Emperor at once saw, that to persist in his attack on Laon, defended by an enemy double in amount to his own force, and with his right wing, for the time at least, *hors de combat*, was a vain attempt. But how to retreat in the face of a victorious enemy was the question; for already Blücher, elated by his success, had given orders to Langeron, Sacken, York, and Kleist,² to pursue

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¹ Plotho, iii.
296, 297.
Dan. 240,
241. Koch, i
415, 417.
Vaud. ii. 49,
51. Die
Grosse
Chron. iii.
603, 606.

68.
Napoleon
prepares to
retreat.
March 10.

² Kausler,
408. Koch, i.
409. Fain,
164. Dan.
242. Die
Grosse
Chron. iii.
606, 613.

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Marmont with the utmost vigour ; and he himself was only waiting on the ramparts of Laon, from whence he saw every movement in the French army, for the commencement of the retreat of the main body, to pursue on the road to Soissons.

69.
Able man-
œuvre by
which it was
effected.

In this dilemma Napoleon adopted the wisest course he could have pursued, which was, to remain where he was, and impose upon the Prussian general by the display of a formidable force in front, so as at once to prevent pursuit of his own corps, and relieve the pressure on that of Marmont. So completely did this plan succeed, that Blucher, who in the first instance had given orders to Bulow and Winzingerode to issue forth from Laon in pursuit of the French main body, not only countermanded the directions upon seeing that they stood firm, and seemed rather preparing for an attack, but despatched orders to the generals in pursuit of Marmont to return with their infantry, and follow him up only with their cavalry. Chernicheff in consequence, who at daybreak had made a successful attack with Winzingerode's advanced guard on the French division at Clacy, on the Allied right, finding himself unsupported, was obliged to return in haste to the foot of the hill of Laon ; and shortly after nine o'clock Napoleon ordered a general advance against that formidable position. The action soon became extremely warm, and when the French approached the hill, they were received by such tremendous discharges of artillery from the heights around its foot, as well as of musketry from the loopholed villages, that after sustaining a severe loss they were obliged to retire. At four o'clock the grand park and equipages began to defile on the road to Soissons, and the French troops withdrew at all points ; but the cannonade continued till nightfall, and from the summit of the ramparts of Laon, the march of the retiring columns could be traced by the sight of villages in flames, and the awful spectacle of granaries, farm-yards, and churches, consuming under the reckless fury of the devastating bands, which, like a stream of lava, over-spread even their own territory with conflagration and ruin.¹

¹ Beauch. i.
412, 414.
Dan. 242,
243. Kausler,
408, 409.
Koch, i. 419,
423. Fain,
164, 165.

Thus terminated the combats around Laon, which,

though scarcely worthy of being dignified by the name of a battle, from the desultory manner in which they were conducted, and the great space over which they extended, were inferior to no pitched engagement fought during the whole war in interest and importance. For the first time during the campaign, the whole disposable forces of the Emperor Napoleon, under his own immediate orders, had been brought to a stand; their assault upon a strong position had been defeated; the object of the expedition beyond the Marne had been frustrated, and the grand army left at liberty to pursue, during ten days, active operations on the side of Troyes and Fontainebleau, which, if vigorously followed up, might have led to the capture of Paris. The combats around Laon, including the losses sustained by Marmont, had cost the French Emperor six thousand men and forty-six pieces of cannon, while the Allies were not weakened by more than four thousand; his total loss since he left Troyes, on the 1st March, amounted to sixteen thousand men.* His situation now appeared altogether desperate:—obliged to retire towards his capital, followed by a victorious army double his own strength, only to fall there into the jaws of a still larger army, driving before it two beaten corps not mustering between them twenty-five thousand sabres and bayonets. In this expedition against Blücher, the Emperor was far from having shown proofs of his wonted skill. His bloody attack on the plateau of Craone had savoured rather of the obstinacy of a victorious, than the caution of a defensive commander; and his plan of attack at Laon, operating by his two wings, separated six miles from each other, and incapable of mutual support, upon an enemy twice his strength, and occupying a central position of uncommon strength between them, was precisely such an error as he had

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70.
Reflections
on this battle.

* Viz.—At Craone,	-	-	-	-	-	8,000
Assault of Soissons,	-	-	-	-	-	1,500
Around Laon,	-	-	-	-	-	6,000
Lesser affairs,	-	-	-	-	-	500

16,000

Such were the chasms made in the ranks during these sanguinary struggles, that an entire reorganisation of great part of the army took place at Soissons, by the amalgamation of the divisions which had principally suffered; and the divisions of the Young Guard of Ney and Victor, as well as the division of infantry of General Poret de Morvau, entirely disappeared.—See KOCH, I. 429; PLOTTO, iii. 301; and *Die Grosse Chronik*, iii. 613.

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71.

Napoleon
rests at Sois-
sons, and
Blucher at
Laon.
March 11.

turned to such admirable account,* when committed by his adversaries at Castiglione in 1796, and at Dresden in 1813.†

But it soon appeared that the genius of Napoleon had been obscured for a moment, though it was not extinguished: and when all thought his fortunes desperate, he struck such a blow, in a quarter where it was least expected, as had well-nigh re-established his affairs, by the renewed timidity which it infused into the Austrian councils. On the night of the 10th the Emperor slept at Chavignon, on the road to Soissons; and on the 11th, the army continued its retreat to the defiles in front of that town. This fortress, which had again fallen into the hands of the French after Radzewitz's retreat to Laon, ever of primary importance during the campaign in this quarter, now offered the same secure passage across the Aisne to the retreating French, which it formerly had done to the retiring Allied army. The whole of the 12th was spent there also: the Emperor being busied with Mortier and the officers of engineers, in providing for the defence of the place; and while giving a brief repose to the wearied soldiers of his army, he himself rode out on horseback to survey the environs, and choose the positions which might appear most defensible. During all this time, and, in fact, for nine days after the battle of Laon, Blucher remained in a state of complete inactivity with his vast army in that impregnable position—a delay, after such an advantage as he had recently gained, which would appear altogether inexplicable, if we did not know that, at this period, the Allied army was almost starving from the total exhaustion of the country in which it had so long carried on the war: that the troops, worn out with six weeks' incessant marching and fighting in the most inclement weather, stood urgently in need of repose;‡ that the veteran field-marshal was so ill,

1 Dan. 243,
245. Fain,
165, 166.
Koch, i. 420,
422. Ploto,
iii. 299, 302.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
624, 626.

* This is accordingly admitted by the ablest of the French military historians, and the most zealous partisans of Napoleon. "It does not appear that the Emperor acted according to the rules of art, or the prudence which the disproportion of his means required, in engaging the Duke of Ragusa, (Marmont,) at the same time that he attacked himself. He was as yet uncertain of the line of the enemy's operations, and his army was not a quarter of theirs in number. That quarter might have conquered if they had been mustered together; but it was impossible to separate one corps without exposing it to destruction from a force tenfold its own."—VAUDONCOURT, ii. 63.

† *Ante*, Chap. xx § 105, and Chap. lxxx. § 24.

from ague and inflammation in the eyes, as to be unable to sit on horseback during the remainder of the campaign; and that Gneisenau and the officers of his staff felt that, having amply performed the part allotted to them in it, the time had arrived when it behoved the grand army to do something worthy of its gigantic strength, and such as might be expected after its long-continued repose.*

On the night of the 12th, however, Napoleon received information which induced him to alter the line of his operations, by presenting him with a new enemy accessible to his strokes, and capable of being destroyed. General St Priest, with his corps of Russians, forming part of the reserves of the army of Silesia, had been left at Chalons, in order to keep up the communication between Blucher and Schwartzemberg; and having learned, during the concentration of all the French troops around Laon, that the garrison left by them in Rheims was very weak, particularly in cavalry, he resolved to attempt to carry the place. Like all the towns in that quarter, it was fortified, though not strongly, and the walls were in disrepair in several places, and but imperfectly armed; and St Priest, having been reinforced by the Prussian brigade of General Jagon, who had marched on after the surrender of Erfurth, determined to hazard an attack. The garrison, about two thousand strong, with only twelve pieces of cannon, were little in a condition to defend a town containing thirty thousand inhabitants against a corps of fifteen thousand men. He met, accordingly, with very little resistance: the garrison, after discharging a few rounds, endeavoured to escape out of the place by a gate which had not been blockaded, and six hundred of them, with ten guns, were made prisoners in the attempt. The town itself was taken, with hardly any of the outrages or disorders consequent on a place carried by assault; some property which had been plundered was immediately restored, and the marauders punished;¹ St Priest himself went to the cathedral to return thanks for his victory, and the troops, for the sake

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72.

Capture of
Rheims by
St Priest.

March 12.

¹ Dan. 248,
250. Burgh.
262. Koch, i.
429, 434.
Fain, 166.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
626, 628.
Valentini,
ii. 171.

* "The true object of our stay here is not a military one. The only design I have in view is to give repose to a harassed army, and as far as possible to provide it with bread."—BLUCHER to WINZINGERODE, 14th March 1814; DANILEFSKY, 244, 245.

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73.
Advance of
Napoleon to
Rheims.

March 13.

of recreation, were in great part allowed to amuse themselves in the surrounding hamlets.

The capture of this important town at once re-established the communications of Blucher with the grand army, and threatened Napoleon's right flank. He had no sooner heard of it, accordingly, than he gave orders for the whole army, with the exception of Mortier's corps, which was left for the defence of Soissons, to defile to the right on the road for Rheims. With such expedition did they march, that on the evening of the same day on which they set out from Soissons, the advanced guards appeared before the walls of Rheims. The Prussian videttes could hardly believe their own eyes, when the increasing numbers of the enemy showed that a serious attack was intended. But notwithstanding repeated warnings sent to St Priest, he persisted in declaring it was only a few light troops that were appearing, and could not be brought to believe that the army so recently defeated at Laon was already in a condition to resume offensive operations. At length, at four o'clock, the cries of the troops, and well-known grenadier caps of the Old Guard, announced that the Emperor himself was on the field; and then, as well he might, the Russian general hastily began to take measures for his defence. The nearest regiments, without order, or any regular array, hurried off to the threatened point; the French, skilfully feigning to be outnumbered, ceased firing and fell back, and for a short time all was quiet. St Priest was confirmed by this circumstance in the belief that it was only a partisan division which was before him, or, at most, the beaten corps of Marmont, for which he conceived himself fully a match; and even on being assured by a prisoner that Napoleon was with the troops, he said, "He will not step over fourteen thousand men; you need not ask which way to retire, there will be no retreat."¹

¹ Die Grosse Chron. iii. 630, 634. Plötho, iii. 353. Koch, i. 440.

74.
Recapture of
Rheims by
Napoleon.

Shortly after Napoleon arrived, and after looking on the town for a short time, dryly observed, "The ladies of Rheims will soon have a bad quarter of an hour," and gave orders for an immediate attack. The Allies by this time had almost entirely assembled in front of the town, and occupied a position in two lines, guarding the approaches to it; the right resting on the river Vesle, the

left extending to the Basse-Muire; the reserves on the plateau of St Genevieve in the suburbs, where twenty-four pieces of cannon were planted. These preparations seemed to prognosticate a vigorous defence; but the promptitude and force of Napoleon's attack rendered them of very little avail. Eight thousand horse, supported by thirty pieces of horse artillery, were directed at once against the Russian left, to which St Priest had hardly any cavalry to oppose; in a few minutes three Prussian battalions were surrounded and made prisoners. At the same time Marmont, supported by the guards of honour and cavalry of the Guard, advanced by the high-road direct upon the enemy's centre. The Russian general upon this, perceiving that he was immensely over-matched, gave orders for the first line to fall back on the second; and, at the same time, the battery of twenty-four guns withdrew towards the rear. Hardly were these movements commenced, when he himself was wounded in the shoulder by a ball. This event discouraged the troops; and the retiring columns, aware of their danger from the great masses which were every where pressing after them, fell into disorder, and hastened, with more speed than was consistent with discipline, into the town. Owing to the narrowness of the bridge and streets, the men got entangled at every step, and in less than a quarter of an hour became a mere mob, while the French infantry and cavalry, with loud shouts, were pressing on their rear. Such was the scene of horror and confusion which soon ensued, that it appeared impossible for any part of the corps to escape; and none in all probability would have done so, but for the steadiness of the regiment of Riazan, which, under its heroic colonel, Count Scobelof, formed square on the field of battle, and not only repulsed the repeated attacks of an enormous mass of cavalry at the entrance of the town, and gave time for a large part of the corps to defile in the rear, but itself pierced through the forest of sabres with the bayonet, bearing their bleeding and dying general in their arms.¹

General Emmanuel now took the command; and the most vigorous efforts were made at the entrance of the town, by disposing the troops in the houses which adjoined it; and so obstinate was the resistance which

¹ Dan. 252,
253. Koch, i.
439, 440.
Burgh. 203.
Vaud. ii. 112,
114. Plotho,
iii. 353, 354.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
633, 634.

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75.

Defeat of the
Allies, and
entrance of
Napoleon into
the town.

they presented, that for above three hours the French were kept at bay. Towards midnight, however, it was discovered that the enemy, by fording the Vesle, had got round the town, and therefore the whole troops in it were withdrawn, some on the road to Chalons, others on that to Laon, while the defence of the gate was intrusted to a non-commissioned officer of the 33d light infantry, with two hundred men. This little band of heroes kept their ground to the last, and were found by the officer sent to withdraw them dividing their few remaining cartridges, and encouraging each other to hold out even till death. When they received orders to retire, they did so in perfect order, as the evacuation was completed; and they fortunately succeeded in effecting their retreat in the darkness. Napoleon then made his entry into the town at one o'clock in the morning by torch-light, amidst the acclamations of his troops, and the enthusiastic cheers of the inhabitants, who gave vent to the general transport in a spontaneous illumination. In this brilliant affair, the French took two thousand five hundred prisoners, eleven guns, and a hundred caissons, and the total loss of the Allies was three thousand five hundred. On the other hand the Emperor Napoleon was only weakened by eight hundred men: a wonderful achievement to have been effected by a worn-out army, after nearly two months' incessant marching and fighting, and two days after a disastrous defeat; but more memorable still, by one circumstance which gives it a peculiar interest—it was the LAST TOWN NAPOLEON EVER TOOK.¹

¹ Koch, i.
439, 440.
Plotho, iii.
355. Vaud.
ii. 114, 115.
Burgh. 203.
Dan. 253.
254. Die
Grosse
Chron. iii.
633, 634.

76.
Stay of
Napoleon at
Rheims,
March 14 to
18.

On the same day General Jansen arrived at the French headquarters from Flanders, bringing with him a reinforcement of six thousand men, which he had collected from the garrisons in the neighbourhood of the Ardennes forest, in obedience to the orders despatched from Fismes twelve days before. This reinforcement was of vast importance at that period, when the Emperor was so severely weakened by the losses of the dreadful campaign in which he had been engaged; and it illustrates the extreme imprudence, of which he had now himself become sensible, of that obstinate tenacity of disposition, which had prompted him so long to retain fifty thousand veterans in useless inactivity

in the German fortresses, and as many more in the places on the Rhine, while he himself, with no greater force than either taken separately, was reduced to his last resources on the plains of Champagne. To repair if possible the error he had committed, he despatched Ney to Chalons, and General Vincent to Epernay, who expelled the enemy from these towns; while the great body of Napoleon's forces were cantoned in Rheims and the villages in its vicinity. During all this time Blucher remained inactive at Laon; and on the 17th a grand review of all his forces took place, when it was ascertained that, with the additions received since the battle there, from St Priest's corps and other sources, they now numbered a hundred and nine thousand combatants, of whom twenty-nine thousand were horse, with two hundred and sixty-five guns. From Chalons Ney despatched, in profusion, officers and secret emissaries, with instructions to all the garrisons on the Rhine, and between that and the theatre of war, to hold themselves in readiness to break through the blockading forces with which they were environed, and join the Emperor as soon as they should receive intimation that the proper moment was arrived. At the same time directions were given to the peasantry in all the rural districts, the moment the Allies began to retreat, to fall on their flanks and lines of communication, and do them all the mischief in their power.¹

Meanwhile, a review took place at Rheims of all the troops under the immediate command of the Emperor; but how different from the splendid military spectacles of the Tuileries or Chamartin, which had so often dazzled his sight with the pomp of apparently irresistible power! Wasted away to half the numbers which they possessed when they crossed the Marne a fortnight before, the greater part of the regiments exhibited only the skeletons of military array. In some, more officers than privates were to be seen in the ranks; in all, the appearance of the troops, the haggard air of the men, their worn-out dresses, and the strange motley of which they were composed, bespoke the total exhaustion of the empire. It was evident to all that Napoleon was expending his last resources. Beside the veterans of the Guard—the iron men whom nothing could daunt, but whose tattered

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¹ Fain, 167,
168. Koch, i.
442, 444.
Vaud. ii. 208,
209. Grosse
Chron. iii.
383, 386.

77.
Last review
of Napoleon
at Rheims,
March 15.

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garments and soiled accoutrements bespoke the dreadful fatigues to which they had been subjected—were to be seen young conscripts, but recently torn from the embraces of maternal love, and whose wan visages and faltering steps told but too clearly that they were unequal to the weight of the arms which they bore. The gaunt figures and woeful aspect of the horses, the broken carriages and blackened mouths of the guns, the crazy and fractured artillery-waggon which defiled past, the general confusion of arms, battalions, and uniforms, even in the best appointed corps, spoke of the mere remains of the vast military array which had so long stood triumphant against the world in arms. The soldiers exhibited none of their ancient enthusiasm as they defiled past the Emperor : silent and sad they took their way before him : the stern realities of war had chased away its enthusiastic ardour. All felt that in this dreadful contest they themselves would perish, happy if they had not previously witnessed the degradation of France.¹

¹ Koch, i.
442, 444.
Fain, 167,
168.

CHAPTER LXXXVII.

CAMPAIGN IN HOLLAND, ITALY, AND THE SOUTH OF
FRANCE, JANUARY—APRIL, 1814.

BUT though Napoleon allowed a few days' repose to his wearied troops, he gave none to his own indefatigable mind; though he witnessed around him the wreck of a world, he stood undaunted amidst its ruins.

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1.

Napoleon's
review of his
empire at
this period.

"Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum *feriunt* ruinae."

During these days of physical repose, he was indefatigable in the cabinet. The varied concerns of his still vast empire passed before his view; despatches from all quarters were received; and his final resolution to reject the terms offered by the Allies at Chatillon was taken. This brief intermission in military operations, both at the headquarters of the Emperor Napoleon, of Marshal Blucher, and of the grand army, affords a favourable opportunity for reviewing, with the now straitened conqueror, the varied condition of the remoter parts of his empire, preparatory to detailing the grand catastrophe of his fall.¹

¹ Fain, 169.

From Antwerp and Flanders the accounts were on the whole satisfactory. After the expulsion of the French from Holland, in the middle of the preceding December, the tricolor flag waved only on Bergen-op-Zoom, Bois-le-Duc, Gorcum, and one or two lesser forts, the main strength of the French forces in that quarter being concentrated in Antwerp, which Napoleon justly classed with Mayence, on the Rhine, and Alessandria in Piedmont, as the principal bulwarks of his empire. To impose upon the Allies, by the sound at least of military preparations, the

2.

Affairs of
the Low
Countries.

CHAP.
LXX XVII.

1814.

Dec. 21, 1813.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1814, 152,
153. Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
39, 40. Koch,
i. 115. Die
Grosse Chron.
iii. 265, 267.

3.
Combat of
Merxem.

Jan. 13.

² Graham's
Official Des-
patch, Jan.
14, 1814.
Ann. Reg.
153. Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
39, 40. Koch,
i. 115, 127.
Plotho, iii.
200. Die
Grosse Chron.
iii. 270, 271.

Emperor, by a decree in the end of December, ordered the formation of an army of fifty-five battalions, the command of which was bestowed on Comte Maison. This respectable force, however, like most of the others of which Napoleon had the direction at this period, existed in great part only on paper ; and when that general arrived at Antwerp in the end of December, he found that he could not reckon on twenty thousand men for the defence of the whole Low Countries. In fact it was apparent that, so far from thinking of the reconquest of Holland, it would be all he could do to provide for the defence of Flanders, now threatened on its maritime quarter by the English, and on the side of the Meuse by the Russians and Prussians. He therefore strengthened the garrisons of Antwerp and Bergen-op-Zoom, and made every possible provision for the victualling, arming, and providing of these fortresses.¹

Meanwhile, an English division, six thousand strong, under the orders of Sir Thomas Graham, who had resigned his command in Spain the day after the victorious passage of the Bidassoa, on the 7th October preceding,* landed in South Beveland, and having concerted measures with Bulow, who had crossed the canal and advanced towards Antwerp, a general forward movement commenced on the 10th January, which, after a variety of minor actions, brought on a warm contest on the 13th, when a combined attack was made on the village of Merxem, near Antwerp, by the British under General Mackenzie in front, and the Prussians under Thumen in flank. The 78th Highlanders headed the assault, led by their brave colonel, McLeod, and the French were driven out of the village and back into Antwerp in the most gallant style, with the loss of a thousand men killed and wounded. The Allies, however, suffered nearly as much from the heavy fire which the enemy kept up at the entrance of the village ; and as they were ignorant of the strength of the garrison of Antwerp, and not prepared at that period to commence the investment of the place, they withdrew at night to their former positions, although they had approached so near to it that their bombs already fell in the suburbs and docks of the fortress.²

On the night of the 25th, aided by the inhabitants,

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxxiii. § 18.

Bulow made a successful attack on Bois-le-Duc, which was taken by escalade, with its garrison of six hundred men. This enabled the Prussian general to turn his whole forces against Maison ; and the latter not feeling himself in sufficient strength to keep the field against the superior forces of the Allies, left Antwerp to its own resources, threw a garrison of a thousand men into Malines, and took post at Louvain, as a central point from which he might be able to observe the numerous enemies who now inundated the Low Countries. They were very formidable ; for, in addition to Bulow and Graham on the side of Antwerp, Winzingerode, with his numerous corps of Russians, was exciting the utmost alarm, as already mentioned, by his unresisted march from the Rhine, by Liege, towards the old French frontier. No sooner was Antwerp left to its own resources than Bulow approached its walls, and completed the investment ; and three thousand additional troops having arrived from England, and a small battering train been obtained from Holland, operations of a vigorous character were commenced against the place. The great object was not to breach and carry its ramparts, for which the battering train as yet at the disposal of the Allies was wholly inadequate, but to bombard the town, and burn the great fleet constructed there by Napoleon, by means of which he had so long flattered himself he would effect the subjugation of Great Britain. Extraordinary precautions had, however, been taken by Admiral Misiessy, who commanded the squadrons, to render nugatory the effects of a bombardment, by blinding the ships in the docks with turf, wet blankets, and a variety of other articles, which rendered them impervious to the heaviest shells, as had been done at Malta in the year 1799. On the first of February, a general attack was made on the French advanced posts beyond the works, by the combined Prussian and British forces ; and although the former experienced a bloody repulse near the village of Duerne, the British pushed back the enemy from Brasschaet to Merxem, and next day carried the latter village by assault, driving the French, with severe loss, entirely into the works of the place on that side.¹ They immediately commenced the construction of mortar batteries

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4.
Investment
of Antwerp.
Jan. 31.

Jan. 27.

Feb. 1.
Feb. 2.
¹ Koch, ii.
132, 136.
Graham's
Desp. Feb. 6,
1814. Ann.
Reg. 1814, p.
156. App. to
Chron.
Plötho, iii.
201, 204.

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5.
Of which
Carnot takes
the com-
mand.

Feb. 2.

behind the dikes of St Ferdinand; and with such vigour were the approaches advanced during the night, that next morning a heavy fire was commenced upon the shipping.

It was at this moment that Carnot took the command at Antwerp. This stern republican—who had lived in retirement since the fall of Robespierre, resisted all the offers of Napoleon during the zenith of his power to lure him from his retreat, and almost singly voted against his being made Emperor,*—now came forward, with true patriotic devotion, to offer him, in his adversity, what remained of strength at sixty-four years of age, for the defence of the country.† Napoleon knew how to appreciate grandeur of character, even in the most decided political opponent. He immediately said, upon receiving the letter, “Since Carnot offers me his services, I know he will be faithful to the post which I assign to him: I appoint him governor of Antwerp.” The sturdy veteran arrived at the fortress, and entered by one of the southern gates the very day before the bombardment commenced. He found the garrison fifteen thousand strong; but nevertheless, anticipating a long siege, and deeming it necessary to husband his resources, he immediately withdrew all his outposts within the outworks, so that the Prussians approached, without resistance, so near the place as to be able to take a part in the bombardment. It produced, however, very little effect. By the admirable precautions of Carnot and Missiessy, the fire, which was repeatedly raised in different quarters of the city and harbour, was immediately extinguished; the vessels of war in the docks were so protected as to be almost impervious to shells; the mortars which the English made use of, brought from Holland, though well served, soon became for the most part unserviceable, from too frequent discharges; and after the bombardment had been kept up three days it was discontinued, from failure of ammunition. At the same time, Bulow

* *Ante*, Chap. xxxviii. § 45.

† “The offer is little, without doubt, of an arm sixty years old; but I thought that the example of a soldier, whose patriotic sentiments are known, might have the effect of rallying to your eagles a number of persons hesitating as to the part which they should take, and who might possibly think that the only way to serve their country was to abandon it.”—CARNOT to NAPOLEON 24th Jan. 1814; *Mémoires sur CARNOT*, p. 135.

received orders to raise the siege of the place, and advance with his corps into France, to take part in the great operations in contemplation against Napoleon, in which, as already mentioned, he rendered the most essential service. The British, not half the strength of the garrison of the place, were in no condition to maintain their ground before it; and accordingly Sir Thomas Graham retired to his former cantonments, between Antwerp and Bergen-op-Zoom; and Carnot, in conformity with his principle of reserving the strength of the garrison for ulterior operations, made no attempt to disquiet them in their retreat.¹

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Feb. 6.
¹ Graham's
Desp. Feb. 6,
1814. Ann.
Reg. 1814, p.
156. App. to
Chron. Vict.
et Conq.
xxiii. 42, 43.
Mém. sur
Carnot, 136,
139.

Though Bulow, however, had passed on into France, and the English had retired to the frontiers of Holland, yet there was no intermission in the deluge of Allied troops which rolled over Flanders. Wave after wave succeeded, as in those days when the long-restrained might of the northern nations found vent in the decaying provinces of the Roman empire. The Prince of Saxe-Weimar, reinforced by Borstell's brigade of Prussians, kept the field at the head of fifteen thousand foot and two thousand horse; Brussels was soon evacuated; and Maison, who retired to Tournay, was watched by the Allies, whose headquarters were at Ath. Gorcum, however, having surrendered, and the blockading force, under the Prussian General Zielenski, having reinforced the Prince of Saxe-Weimar, he advanced against the French general, who retired towards Quesnoy and Maubeuge. Nothing of moment occurred in this quarter till the 8th of March, when the prince made an attack on Maison's troops with twelve thousand men, and drove them from the positions they occupied in front of Courtray, under the cannon of Lille; so that, with the exception of Antwerp, Bergen-op-Zoom, Ypres, Condé, and Maubeuge, which were still in the hands of the French, the whole of Austrian Flanders was wrested from the arms of Napoleon.²

6.
Progress of
the war in
Flanders.

Feb. 3.

Feb. 4.

Feb. 17.

March 8.

² Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
44, 48. Koch,
ii. 137, 154.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
273, 277.

But an important event occurred at this period in Holland, which deserves to be more particularly noticed, both on account of the admirable skill with which it was projected by the English general, and the combined gallantry on the part of the French, and remissness on that of

7.
Description
of Bergen-op-
Zoom.

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the British, which rendered a successful attack ultimately abortive. This was the assault of BERGEN-OP-ZOOM by Sir Thomas Graham. This celebrated fortress, well known in the wars of the Low Countries, and strengthened by the successive labour of many centuries, was justly regarded by the Dutch as their principal bulwark on the side of the Netherlands. It was in every respect the worthy antagonist of Antwerp, to which it was directly opposite at the distance only of fifteen miles. On its works the famous Cohorn had exhausted all the resources of his art; and though the town is inconsiderable, containing not more than six thousand souls, the works were so extensive that they could only be adequately manned by a garrison of twelve thousand men. In addition to this, an immense system of mines and subterraneous works rendered all approach by an enemy to the ramparts hazardous in the extreme. The place is divided into two parts: the town, properly so called, and the port, which are separated from each other by internal walls, but both included in the external ramparts. The former has three gates, those of Steenberg, Breda, and Antwerp; the latter but one, called the Water gate. The garrison, nominally four thousand five hundred strong, but of whom not more than two thousand seven hundred were effective, under General Bizanet, was inadequate to the manning of the extensive outworks, some of which were negligently guarded; some of the scarps were out of repair, and the hard frost which had so long prevailed, had entirely frozen over the wet ditches lying in front of its ravelins and ramparts.¹

¹ Personal observation. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 49, 50. Koch, ii. 151, 152.

8.
Plan of the attack.

Encouraged by these circumstances, which seemed to offer a favourable opportunity for surprising the place, Graham, who had secret intelligence with several of the inhabitants, who were almost all seafaring people heartily desirous of being delivered from the French yoke, in secret made his preparations for a general attack, and fixed the execution of the attempt for the 8th of March, being the day before the Prince of Orange's birthday. The troops, three thousand three hundred strong, were divided into four columns. The first, under General Lord Proby, mustering about a thousand bayonets, was ordered to attempt forcing an entrance by escalade between the

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Antwerp and Water gates; the second, under Colonel Morrice, twelve hundred strong, was to attack to the right of the Water gate; the third, led by Colonel Honey, six hundred strong, to distract the enemy by a false menace at the Steenberg gate; and the fourth, headed by Skerret and Gore, consisting of eleven hundred men, to assault the mouth of the harbour, which was fordable at low water, for which reason the attack was fixed for half-past ten o'clock at night. General Cooke commanded the whole. The troops employed in the four columns amounted in all to three thousand three hundred men in the assault, and six hundred in the feint. The instructions to Generals Cooke and Gore, upon whom the weight of the assault would depend, were, as soon as they got to the top of the rampart, to incline towards each other, if possible unite, and immediately force open the Antwerp gate. Scaling-ladders of adequate height were provided for the men; the utmost secrecy was enjoined on the assaulting columns; no light was allowed among them: while that intrusted with the false attack on the Steenberg gate was instructed to raise as much noise, and keep up as sharp a rattle of musketry as possible.¹

¹ Sir T. Graham's Desp. March 10, 1814. Ann. Reg. 1814, p. 170. App. to Chron. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 49, 50. Koch, 153, 154.

These orders were punctually obeyed. Shortly before ten o'clock, a loud fire of musketry was heard at the Steenberg gate. It proceeded from the third column, which, having surprised the advanced guards and out-works, was arrested at the drawbridge of the chief moat and port of the rampart by a discharge of small arms. Thither the garrison reserves were immediately directed, and the assailants repulsed with great loss. Meanwhile the fourth column successfully made its way into the harbour mouth, unobserved in the dark, and after winding its painful course among the numerous iron crow's-feet scattered in the bottom of the channel, at a quarter before eleven reached the top of the rampart without the loss of a man, and seized and forced open the Water gate; while detachments, under Colonel Carleton and General Skerret, were sent to the ramparts on the right and left, which were almost wholly undefended. As soon as the alarming progress of the assailants in this quarter was known, the remaining reserves of the garrison were directed to the bastions adjoining the Water gate;² and

9.
Commence-
ment and
early success
of the assault.

² Koch, ii. 153. Jones, ii. 307. Vaud. ii. 140.

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after a sharp conflict Colonel Carleton, who commanded the detachment which moved to the right along the ramparts, was repulsed and driven back towards that entrance.

10.
The guards
win the ram-
part near the
Antwerp
gate.

At the same time, however, Colonel Morrice, with his column, made his way across the ice, and reached the counterscarp undiscovered, near the Breda gate ; but the garrison there being well prepared, a severe fire of grape and musketry from the summit of the rampart prevented them from crossing the ditch, or getting into the body of the place. Hardly was the danger arrested in this quarter, when a still more formidable attack was made between the Antwerp and Water gates. This came from the guards under Lord Proby, who, after being diverted from their original point of attack by the ice, which, weakened by the tide, gave way under their weight, had turned aside, and, following the foot of the wall to a place where the passage was practicable, had at length reached the summit of the rampart on the left of the Antwerp gate. The guards were there formed under the immediate direction of General Cooke, and a detachment was sent on the one side to the Antwerp port, and on the other to gain intelligence of Skerret and Gore at the Water gate and harbour. The strength of the Antwerp gate, however, was such as to defy all their efforts to force it open ; and though Gore's detachment, in the first instance, defeated a column of the garrison which advanced against it, yet the French reserves came up, and in the end overpowered it. But at this moment Morrice's column, which had been repulsed at its own point of attack, came round by the foot of the glacis, mounted the walls by Lord Proby's ladders, and formed on the ramparts to the left of the guards.¹

¹ Jones' Sieges, ii. 307, 317. Koch, ii. 153, 155. Burgh. 283, 284. Vaud. ii. 140.

11.
The French
rally, and
defeat the
assault.

To all appearance Bergen-op-Zoom was now taken ; and with an ordinary garrison and governor it would have been so. Seven hundred and fifty men were in battle array on the ramparts adjoining the Water gate, and had possession of that gate, and fifteen hundred on those between it and the Antwerp gate : in all, they occupied fourteen of the sixteen fronts of the bastions of the place. The fortress was considered as so completely carried, that the detachment which had made the false attack on the Steenberg gate retired to their canton-

ments, and a brigade of Germans, which had advanced from Tholen at the first firing, countermarched and returned home. The French troops, of no greater strength than the assailants, withdrew for the most part to the market-place, in the centre of the town, fully expecting to surrender at daybreak. But as the night wore on, matters essentially changed. The excessive cold benumbed the British troops, and chilled the first ardour of success; some of them broke into spirit-shops adjoining their position, and became intoxicated; no reinforcements were sent to them from without, and the French, as day dawned, discovered the small number of their antagonists, and perceived that one-third of them at the Water gate were separated from the remaining two-thirds on the bastions of the Antwerp gate. The governor, accordingly, directed his whole efforts, in the first instance, against Skerret's detachment on the bastions near the Water gate, and having driven them into a low situation, where they were exposed to a raking fire from two faces of the rampart, compelled them to lay down their arms, but not before Gore and Skerret had both fallen, bravely combating at the head of their troops. He then formed his whole force for an attack on the British, fifteen hundred strong, on the summit of the Antwerp bastions. The contest here was long and bloody; but at length General Cooke, having learned the destruction of Skerret and Gore's detachments, and finding his men wasting away without any chance of success, was compelled to surrender. In this brilliant, though disastrous affair, the British lost above nine hundred killed and wounded, and eighteen hundred men laid down their arms, though they were next day exchanged by convention with the French governor.¹

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¹ Jones' Sieges, ii. 317, 324. Graham's Official Account, March 10, 1814. Ann. Reg. 1814, 171. App. to Chron. Koch, ii. 155, 156. Le Grand, 32, 37.

Such was the termination of this extraordinary assault, doubly memorable, both from the circumstance that one of the strongest fortresses in the world had its ramparts carried by storm, when the governor was aware of the enemy's intention, and prepared to repel it, without any approaches, or attempt to breach the walls, by an assaulting force of no greater strength than the garrison; and from the still more marvellous result, that this assaulting column, victorious on the ramparts, was in the end

12.
Reflections
on this as-
sault.

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¹ O'Meara, ii.
171.

² Jones'
Sieges, ii. 305.

obliged to lay down its arms to an equal force of the enemy, but in possession of the guns of the place. It excited, accordingly, a vivid interest in the mind of Napoleon, who frequently recurred to it, both at Elba and St Helena. He admitted that Graham's plan was both daring and well conceived; and imputed the failure of the enterprise to the energy of the French governor, the courage of his troops, and the want of due support to the attacking columns.¹ In truth, the slightest consideration must be sufficient to show, that it is to the last circumstance that the failure of this boldly conceived and gallant enterprise is principally to be ascribed. The English general had at his command nine thousand British or German troops, of whom not more than four thousand at the utmost were engaged in the assault.² If a reserve of two thousand had been stationed near the walls, and advanced rapidly to the support of their comrades the moment the ramparts of the Antwerp gate were taken, not a doubt can exist that the town must have fallen. Nay, if the troops who retired from the feigned attack on the Steenberg gate had been sent round to the support of Skerret and Gore by the Water gate, of which the latter had possession, it is probable the enterprise would have been crowned with success.

13.
Causes of its
failure, and
reflections on
the conduct
of the com-
manders on
both sides.

Of the ease with which fresh troops from without might have effected an entrance, even without blowing open that gate, we have decisive evidence in the fact, that Morrice's whole division, at one in the morning, ascended by Lord Proby's ladders, and formed on the summit without the loss of a man. But why was not a petard or a field-piece brought up, when the British were in possession of that gate, to blow it open, as has so often been done with such success in India? These considerations show, that the hero of Barossa, the gallant veteran who had first planted the British standards on the soil of France, inured to a long course of triumphs, was on this occasion inspired with an undue contempt for his enemies, and forgot the first rule of tactics, that of having a reserve at hand, and vigorously advancing it to support the columns which had gained what, by such aid, might be rendered a decisive success. On the other hand, the highest praise is due to the resolution and skill of the

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French governor, and to the intrepidity of his troops, who, undismayed by reverses which in general crush a garrison, found in their own energy the means of obviating them, and converting incipient disaster into ultimate victory. The conduct of both to the prisoners taken, and the readiness with which they agreed to and observed an armistice for burying the dead, proves that in this, as in all other cases, humanity is closely allied to the warlike virtues. From the whole events of this extraordinary assault, the young soldier may take a lesson of the highest daring and skill in designing an enterprise, of the most undaunted resolution and energy in repelling it. He may from them impress the momentous truth on his mind, that the best conceived attacks may often in the end miscarry, from want of prudence and foresight in executing them, or an undue contempt of the enemy against whom they are directed ; and that, even in circumstances apparently hopeless, vigour and resolution will sometimes retrieve the most formidable disasters.

This bloody check paralysed the operations of the British in the Low Countries, whose efforts were thenceforward limited, with the assistance of an inconsiderable body of Prussians, to the blockade of Bergen-op-Zoom and Antwerp. Carnot continued to exert his great talents in the preparations for the defence of Antwerp, and made more than one excursion with part of the garrison from its walls ; but as the siege was not resumed, there was no opportunity of putting his system to the test. In the middle of March, however, General Thielman brought up a powerful reinforcement of fifteen thousand Saxons to the support of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar. This raised the forces of the latter to thirty-seven thousand men, of whom twenty-seven thousand were disposable, with forty-one pieces of cannon. The opposing armies were now no longer equal ; Maison was unable to keep the field, and retired under the cannon of Maubeuge and Lille, whither he was speedily followed by the Saxons under Thielman ; upon which he threw a thousand men into the latter fortress, and retired into an intrenched camp under the cannon of the former. A *coup-de-main*, attempted by the Duke of Saxe-Weimar on the 21st on Maubeuge, was repulsed, after three days' fighting, by the

14.
Concluding
movements
of the cam-
paign in
Flanders.

March 21.

CHAP.
LXXXVII.

1814.

March 23.

¹ Vict. et

Conq. xxiii.

50, 53. Koch,

ii. 157, 163.

Plotho, iii.

472, 475.

combined efforts of the little garrison and the brave inhabitants; while an incursion of Thielman to push his parties up to the gates of Lille, was defeated by Maison himself, two days afterwards. In fine, Flanders was lost to Napoleon; but the vigour and activity of the French general supplied the deficiency of numbers, and promised a tedious succession of sieges before the iron frontier of old France was finally broken through.¹

From Italy, the accounts which Napoleon received at Rheims were less encouraging. It has already been mentioned, that in the end of December Eugene Beauharnais had retired to the line of the Adige, which he occupied with thirty-six thousand combatants, of whom three thousand were horse; while the Austrian troops opposed to them under Bellegarde were above fifty thousand, besides the detached corps of Marshall, which observed Venice and Palma-Nuova in the rear.* This disproportion of force was the more alarming, that the forces of the Viceroy were for the most part new levies from the plain of Lombardy, on whom very little reliance could be placed to meet the shock of the Transalpine bayonets; while a considerable part of the Austrians were old troops, and they were all animated, from the recent successes in Germany, with the very highest spirit. Eugene in consequence was already taking measures for a retreat, when the proclamation of Murat against Napoleon, already mentioned, on the 19th January, and his consequent occupation of the Roman states, by exposing his right flank and communications, rendered an immediate retrograde movement a matter of necessity. He commenced his retreat accordingly from the Adige, and fell back to the Mincio, where he stationed his troops behind that classic stream, with the right resting on Mantua, and the left on Peschiera; while the Austrians, following him, took post in a corresponding line opposite, from Rivoli to the neighbourhood of Mantua.²

No position could be more advantageous than the defensive one thus assumed by the Viceroy to resist the incursions of the Imperialists in his front; but it was by no means equally well protected against the army of Murat on his flank, which was now approaching so near as to

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxxiv. § 63.

15.

Affairs of
Italy. Re-
treat of Eu-
gene to the
Mincio.

Feb. 3.

² Vict. et

Conq. xxiii.

191, 196.

Koch, ii. 163,

179. Plotho,

iii. 384.

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16.

Reasons
which led
Eugene to
give battle.

give serious cause for uneasiness. This monarch, preferring the chance of a throne to duty and honour, had concerted his measures with the Austrian and English commanders; and after entering the Ecclesiastical States, in the beginning of December, with twenty-three thousand men, was to operate on the Po, in conjunction with a British expedition under Lord William Bentinck, which, embarking from Sicily, received orders to make for Leghorn, and threaten Genoa and the maritime coasts of Napoleon's Italian dominions. Desirous of ridding himself of one enemy before he encountered another, Eugene adopted the bold, but yet, in his circumstances, prudent resolution of marching forward, with a view to give battle to Bellegarde, and if possible throw him across the Adige before Murat's troops could reach the theatre of action. His resolution was just taken in time; for at that very moment a convention had been signed with Murat, who had advanced to Bologna and declared war against France, fixing on combined operations on both banks of the Po. Thus both parties at the same time were preparing offensive movements against each other; and their mutual execution of their designs simultaneously, brought on one of the most singular actions that ever was fought.¹

Feb. 8.

¹ Koch. ii.
172, 181.
Vict. et Conq.
xxiii. 193,
195. Botta,
iv. 478.

The two armies, assuming the offensive at the same time, mutually passed each other, and the advanced guard of the one, from the way in which they were marching, came first in contact with the rearguard of the other. The Austrian right, early in the morning, crossed the Mincio at Borghetto, and drove back Grenier's division, which formed the French left, in the direction of Marengo. Eugene was advancing with his right to cross the same river at Valeggio, his right wing already over, when the cannonade on the left was heard. The moment that he received intelligence of what was there going forward, he conceived the bold idea of suddenly changing his front on both sides of the river, and assailing the enemy in flank while half across it, and in the course of their march little prepared for a battle. It was an exact repetition of Napoleon's perpendicular attack at Austerlitz, or Wellington's at Salamanca. An irregular action in consequence ensued, the French army advancing with great resolution in two lines, with their cavalry

17.
Battle of the
Mincio.
Feb. 8.

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Feb. 9.

Feb. 10.

and 14.

¹ Botta, iv.

478, 479.

Koch, ii. 181.

193. Vict. et

Conq. xxiii.

195, 199.

18.
Evacuation

of Tuscany

by the

French.

Feb. 14.

Feb. 16.

on the two flanks ; the Austrians, surprised in their march, suddenly wheeling about and fronting the enemy wherever they came upon them. The hottest fighting was around Valeggio, where several desperate charges of cavalry and bloody combats of infantry took place, which occasioned severe loss on both sides ; but at the close of the day both parties maintained nearly the ground on which they had commenced the action, though upon the whole the advantage was rather on the side of the French, who accumulated a preponderating force on the decisive point at Valeggio, and made fifteen hundred prisoners. Three thousand were killed or wounded on both sides. On the day following, the Viceroy retreated across the Mincio at Goito, and Bellegarde immediately pushed over some divisions in pursuit. But they were so rudely handled, after some success in the outset at Borghetto, Salo, and Gardone, that the Austrian general, after a few days' skirmishing, withdrew his troops entirely across the Mincio, alleging as an excuse, that the King of Naples was not as yet in a condition to take his part in the proposed operations.¹

But although success was thus balanced on the Mincio, affairs were rapidly going to wreck in other quarters ; and every thing presaged the speedy expulsion of the French from the Italian peninsula. The castle of Verona surrendered to the Austrians on the 14th ; Ancona, after a siege of twenty-five days, and a bombardment of forty-eight hours, capitulated to Murat's forces on the 16th : and the Italian troops in Eugene's service, despairing of the cause of Napoleon, and unable to endure the fatigues and hardships of a winter campaign, deserted in such numbers, that it was found indispensable to station the few that remained in the fortresses of Peschiera and Mantua. The arrival, at Eugene's headquarters, of nearly all the French in the service of the King of Naples, after his declaration of war against Napoleon, was far from counterbalancing this great defalcation ; and the Viceroy, unable to maintain his extended position on the Mincio, drew nearer to the Po, and brought up his whole reserves from the Milanese states. Meanwhile, Pisa was threatened by Pignatelli's division, forming part of Murat's army,* which, being now disengaged from Ancona, was

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able to invade in force the Tuscan provinces. Its governor, Pouchain, upon that summoned seven hundred of the garrison of Leghorn to his support; and as this entirely denuded the maritime districts, Fouché, who held a general commission from the Emperor, in his quality of governor of Rome, to arrange the affairs of central Italy, concluded a convention with the Neapolitan general, in virtue of which the citadels of Pisa, Leghorn, and Lucca, in the Tuscan territories, were delivered up to the Allies; and the garrisons of Volterra, Civita-Vecchia, Florence, and the castle of St Angelo, were to be withdrawn, and transported by sea to the south of France.¹

Feb. 20.
¹ Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
202, 203.
Koch, ii. 194.
Fouché, ii.
262.

The old revolutionist, the author of the *mitrailleurs* at Lyons, the arch-director of Napoleon's police, had his own views in this convention; it led to a secret conference between him and Murat, a few days after, at Modena, in which he congratulated the Neapolitan monarch upon having extricated himself so adroitly, by joining the coalition, from the wreck of his imperial brother-in-law's fortune, and persuaded him to issue his celebrated proclamation against Napoleon. He also contrived to extract from him, before the meeting broke up, a hundred and seventy thousand francs of arrears of pay due to him as governor of Rome, and three hundred thousand francs (£12,000) in bills of exchange, for the cession of his rights on the duchy of Otranto. Having accomplished this object, the wary statesman next proceeded, with all possible expedition, across the Alps into the south of France, and thence cautiously drew near to Paris, anxious to have a hand in the convulsion in that capital which he foresaw was approaching; hastening, like the vulture, to the spot where revolutionary cupidity was to feast on the carcass of imperial greatness.²*

19.
Secret views
of Fouché in
this.
Feb. 24.

² Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
202, 203.
Koch, ii. 194,
195. Fouché,
ii. 262, 275.

* "I had a secret conference with Murat at Modena. There I made him sensible, since he had a decisive part to take, that he ought to declare himself. 'If you,' said I, 'had as much firmness in your character as you have noble sentiments in your heart, you would be more powerful in Italy than the coalition.' He still hesitated; I then communicated to him *my most recent news from Paris*. Determined by their import, he intrusted to me the proclamation which he soon afterwards issued against Napoleon. . . . Soon after, I had a secret interview with Eugene, at the time when he received the intelligence of the Emperor's recent success over Blucher at Champagne. 'Return to Eugene,' said the Emperor to the aide-de-camp who brought the intelligence; 'tell him how I have settled with these gentlemen here: they are a set of rascals whom I will put to flight with strokes of the whip.' All the world at the Viceroy's headquarters were in transports at this intelligence: I took Eugene aside, and told him such

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20.

Operations of
Lord W.
Bentinck on
the coast of
Tuscany.
March 8.

Meanwhile Lord William Bentinck, at the head of a considerable expedition from Sicily, amounting to seven thousand men, of whom, however, only one-half were British soldiers, set sail from Palermo on the last day of February, and arrived off Leghorn on the 8th of March. The troops were immediately landed, the French garrison having been previously transported to the south of France, in virtue of the convention concluded with Murat; and the English general immediately issued a proclamation, in which he called on the Tuscans to rise and join his troops in liberating Italy from the oppressors. At the same time the hereditary prince of Sicily, who accompanied the expedition, issued of his own authority a proclamation, in which he openly brought forward his claims to the throne of Naples, and announced to the Sicilian troops in the expedition that he was about to assert them by force of arms. This injudicious and ill-timed effusion immediately gave umbrage to Murat, who had declared for the Allies only in order to preserve that throne; and it not only had the effect of making him suspend his operations on the Po against the Viceroy, and concentrate his troops in order to be ready for any contingency, but produced such ill-humour in his mind, as had well-nigh thrown him again into the arms of Napoleon.¹

March 10.

¹ Koch, ii.
208. Botta,
iv. 480.

21.

Umbrage
taken by Mu-
rat at the
proclamation
of the Prince
of Sicily.
March 23.

Bentinck had an interview with him, and insisted upon the evacuation of Tuscany by the Neapolitan troops; but he failed in appeasing his wrath or gaining that object, and a rupture seemed inevitable, when it was fortunately prevented by the seasonable interposition of the British government, who disavowed the hereditary prince's proclamation, and relinquished the demand for the evacuation of Tuscany. Meanwhile the English general, finding combined operations with the King of Naples in his present temper impossible, moved his troops

rodomontade could impose on none but enthusiastic fools: that all reasonable persons saw the imminent danger in which the imperial throne was placed; and that it was not the nation which was wanting to Napoleon, but Napoleon, by his despotism, who had destroyed the spirit of the nation. I gave some good counsel to Eugene, and set out for Lyons; and there, as I saw the spirit of resistance was alive only in the public functionaries, I announced that a million of men were pouring into France, the defection of the King of Naples, and that it was impossible to reinstate affairs but by a great political change. I soon saw that the authorities had secret instructions regarding me, and in effect I was soon after obliged to set out for Valence and Dauphiné instead of Paris, the only destination to which I was at that juncture inclined."—*Mémoires de Fouché*, ii. 263, 275.

from Pisa to Lucca, in order to co-operate with the second division of the expedition, which had landed in the gulf of La Spezia, in a general attack on Genoa. It did not take place, however, till after the fall of Napoleon, and though entirely successful, as will afterwards appear, was accompanied with declarations on the part of Lord William, which proved in no small degree embarrassing in the final settlement of Europe at the Congress of Vienna.¹

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¹ Botta, iv.
480, 481.
Ann. Reg.
32, 33.
Koch, ii. 208,
210.

The concentration of troops which took place, however, in consequence of Murat's jealousy of the hereditary prince, relieved Eugene from part of the weight which had hitherto oppressed him, and demonstrated again for the hundredth time the inability of the Neapolitan soldiers to withstand the shock of the Transalpine bayonets. Murat, having pushed forward a brigade under Colonel Metzko to Casal-Maggiore on the Po, commenced the construction of a bridge there; but Metzko was surprised three days afterwards by Bonnermain, with a division of Eugene's men, driven from the place, and the whole boats which had been collected were taken. Murat upon this retired; and Eugene, having pushed General Grenier with his division, entirely French, across the river at Borgoforte, chased the Neapolitans with great loss from Guastalla; and next day the victors appeared before Parma, and routed the Allied troops which occupied it. In this affair, Metzko's Neapolitan brigade was entirely dispersed; sixteen hundred men, chiefly Austrians, were taken in the town of Parma; and Grenier, following up his success before the enemy could recover from their consternation, made himself master of Reggio, and threw the Neapolitans back to the foot of the Apennines. Murat, however, discovering some days afterwards that this town was only occupied by three thousand men, pushed forward his advanced guard, composed entirely of Austrians, and carried Rubiera, where a detachment was placed, by assault, driving the garrison back to Reggio. Encouraged by this success, he advanced to the attack of the latter town; and Severoli, who commanded the troops which occupied it, had the imprudence to deliver a pitched battle before its walls, against a German force nearly three times superior, in which, after a

22.
Successes of
Eugene on
the Po.

Feb. 24.

Feb. 27.

March 1.

March 2.

March 3.

March 6.

March 7.

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March 8.

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
205, 207.
Koch, ii. 195,
206. Bot. ii.
479.

23.
Affairs at
Lyons.
Jan. 1.

Jan. 14.

² Koch, ii.
211, 219.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
207, 210.
Plötho, iii.
452.

gallant resistance, he was worsted. Having been obliged to leave the field severely wounded, his successor in the command, Rambourg, withdrew into the town, and soon after entered into a convention with Murat for its evacuation. The King of Naples, in consequence, entered Reggio on the following day, and pushed his vanguard on to Parma; but there the advance of the Neapolitans was arrested, by the proclamation of the hereditary prince of Sicily already mentioned. The concentration of the Neapolitan troops in Tuscany enabled Eugene again to assume a menacing aspect on the Mincio, against Bellegarde; and the whole remainder of March passed away, without any enterprise of note taking place on the part of any of the three armies which now contended for the empire of Italy.¹

Events of no ordinary importance had also at this period occurred at Lyons and its vicinity, where Augereau had been left, as already mentioned, to make head against the Austrian corps of Count Bubna. It has been noticed, also, that Geneva was occupied by the Austrian commander in the beginning of January without resistance; and such was the state of destitution in which the military force and fortresses of France at that period were, that if they had pushed on, they might with ease have made themselves masters of Lyons and the whole course of the Upper Rhone, before the middle of that month. The progress of the Austrians, however, was so slow, that it was not till the 14th of January that their advanced posts even appeared before Lyons; and on that very day Augereau arrived from Paris to take the command. At that period there were only seventeen hundred regular troops in the garrison, inadequately supported by some thousand National Guards. Despairing of arresting the attack of the enemy with such feeble means, Augereau proceeded on to the south, to Valence, in order to hasten the armaments and organise troops in that direction; leaving General Musnier in command of the slender garrison at Lyons, with instructions to retard the enemy as much as possible, but not to expose the city to the horrors of an assault.²

The imminent danger that Lyons, the second city in the empire, would speedily fall before the Austrian

general, who had twenty thousand men around its walls, joined to the urgent representations of Augereau as to the total inadequacy of the means at his disposal for its defence, induced Napoleon to take the most vigorous measures for its relief. Augereau sent a thousand men in post carriages from Valence, who arrived during the night of the 18th; and reinforcements having come in from other quarters soon after, the Austrians, who were ignorant of the real weakness of the garrison, and had not heavy artillery to undertake a siege, retired to Montluel on the road to Geneva, where they remained inactive till the end of January. This retrograde movement, coupled with the daily arrival of some hundred conscripts from the depots in the south and west within their walls, revived the spirit of the Lyonese, who in the first instance had despaired altogether of the possibility of resistance; and the National Guard soon raised the effective force in the garrison to ten thousand men. The Austrians now gave up all thoughts of an immediate attack on Lyons; and, extending themselves from Geneva towards the valleys of Savoy, entered Chambery after some successful combats, and got possession of the well-known and romantic defile of Echelles, the only direct though steep and rugged entrance from the plain of the Rhone into the Alpine heights. At the same time Bubna pushed a considerable body of troops towards Chalons-sur-Saone, made himself master of that town, and the whole country between the Aisne and the Saone. He every where disarmed the inhabitants, and applied the resources of the district to the supply of the Allied forces.¹

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23.

Combats in
Savoy.

Jan. 18.

Jan. 20.

Jan. 21.

Jan. 20.

Jan. 31.

1 Plotho, iii.

453, 457.

Koch, ii. 211,

225. Vict. et

Conq. xxiii.

211, 215,

Die Grosse

Chron. iii.

181, 184.

24.

Augereau re-
sumes the of-
fensive in the
Jura and
Savoy.

Feb. 14.

The efforts of Napoleon, however, to reinforce the army at Lyons, at length produced the desired effect. A considerable body of troops was drawn from Suchet's army in Catalonia, transported by post to Nismes, and thence forwarded, with every sabre and bayonet which could be collected in Languedoc, to the threatened city. These great reinforcements raised the troops under Augereau, who had now re-established his headquarters in Lyons, to twenty-one thousand men, who were divided into two corps, one of which, twelve thousand strong, under the command of the marshal in person, acted on the right bank of the Rhone, while the other, of nine thousand,

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1814.

Feb. 19.

Feb. 20.

Feb. 15.

Feb. 19,
Feb. 22, 23,
and 26.

¹ Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
214, 220.
Koch, ii. 226,
232. Plottho,
iii. 454, 455.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
184, 191.

led by Marchand, operated on the left. This force was much greater than any which Bubna could bring against it; and as this accumulation on the side of Lyons occurred at the very time when Napoleon enjoined a vigorous offensive to Augereau, after his own defeat of Blucher, and resumption of operations against the grand army at Montereau, in order to threaten its flanks and rear, the marshal immediately commenced active hostilities on both sides of the Rhone. Gradually the Austrians were forced back on the road from Lyons to Geneva; Bourg and Nantua were recovered; Marchand forced the pass of Echelles after a bloody conflict, and drove the enemy in confusion to Chambery, where, nearly surrounded, they were glad to escape to Aix on the lake of Bourget, between that town and Geneva, where they took up a strong position, with the lake on one flank, the precipitous mountains on the other, and a morass in front. There, however, they were soon attacked by the French, now flushed with victory; the position was carried, Aix taken, and the Austrians, after several unsuccessful combats, were thrown back to the heights in front of Geneva.¹

25.
Displeasure
of Napoleon
at the direc-
tion of these
attacks.

Considerable as these successes were, they were very far from either answering the expectations, or carrying out the views of the French Emperor. It was on the banks of the Seine, and not either in Savoy or on the banks of the Rhone, that the contest was to be decided. Napoleon intended Augereau to threaten the flanks and rear of the grand army at the very time that he assailed it in front; and every movement on that marshal's part was therefore eccentric, and to be deprecated, which did not bring him close upon Schwartzemberg's rear. He was no sooner informed, accordingly, of the direction of the French forces from Lyons into Savoy, than he wrote to his lieutenant that it was towards Geneva and the Pays de Vaud that his march should be turned, as they lay on the communications of the grand army; that it was by massing his troops together, and acting at one point, that great things were to be done; and that he should forget he was fifty-six years old, and think only of his brilliant days at Castiglione.^{2*}

² Fain, 116.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
219. Ante,
c. xx. § 106.

* "Count Bubna has not ten thousand men under his command to oppose to you—miserable troops, who will disappear like a mist before the sun at the aspect of your old bands from Catalonia. France and Switzerland have their

Augereau, however, was fearful of engaging his troops, of whom not more than one-half were thoroughly disciplined and experienced, in a distant warfare in the defiles of the Jura; and he remained almost inactive till the end of February, content with the successes he had already gained on the side of Savoy—a degree of torpor, considering the vital interests which were then at stake in the headquarters of Schwartzberg's army, and the terror which this movement from Lyons had already excited amongst the Austrian generals, which the French military historians may well denominate fatal. Meanwhile, the Allied sovereigns, as already mentioned,* directed the reserves of the grand army towards Chalons and Macon, in the direction of Lyons, and the formation of an army, to be called the army of the south, forty thousand strong, on the banks of the Saone; and Napoleon, to counterbalance this great detachment, ordered Suchet to reinforce Augereau with ten thousand additional veterans from the army of Catalonia, and Prince Borghese to send eight thousand, with all possible expedition, across Mont Cenis to Lyons, so that, by the beginning of April, the contending armies on the Rhone would each amount to nearly fifty thousand men.¹

Roused at length from his ruinous inactivity at Lyons

eyes upon you; the inhabitants of the Pays de Vaud and Argovia have sixteen battalions of militia ready to range themselves on your side; the cantons of St Gall, Soleure, and a part of Zurich, only await your standards to declare themselves in favour of the French. Forget that you are fifty-six years old, and think only of your brilliant days at Castiglione." And a few days after he wrote, "The Emperor is not satisfied with your dispositions, in pushing detachments in this manner wherever the enemy has forces, instead of striking at his heart. He directs me in consequence to reiterate the orders you have already three times received. You are to *unite all your forces into one column*, and march either into the Pays de Vaud or the Jura, according as the enemy is in most force in the one or the other. It is by concentrating forces in masses that great successes are obtained. I have the best reasons for assuring you that the enemy is seriously alarmed at the movements he supposes you are to make, and which he was bound to expect; he would be too happy if he could assure himself that you would merely send out detachments in different directions, all the while remaining yourself quiet at Lyons. It is by putting yourself at the head of your troops, as the Emperor wishes, and acting vigorously, that you can alone effect a great and useful diversion. The Emperor conceives it to be altogether immaterial that the battalions of reserve from Nismes are ill-clothed and equipped, since they have muskets and bayonets. He desires me to tell you that the corps of Gerard, which has done such great things under his eyes, is composed of conscripts half naked. He has at this moment four thousand National Guards in his army, with round hats, with peasants' coats and waistcoats, and without knapsacks, armed with all sorts of muskets, on whom he puts the greatest value; he only wishes he had thirty thousand of them."—DUC DE FELTRE (CLARKE) à M. LE DUC DE CASTIGLIONE, Feb. 22 and 23, 1814.—*Victoires et Conquêtes*, xxiii. 219, 220.

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxxvi. § 5.

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26.

Notwithstanding which Augereau does nothing more.

¹ Fain, 116.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
219, 221.
Koch, ii.
237, 239.
Vaud. i.
431, 438;
and ii. 142,
144. Die
Grosse
Chron. iii.
191, 198.

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27.

Augereau's
operations in
the Jura.
Feb. 27, and
28.

March 2.

March 3.

March 7.

March 9.

March 11.

March 18.

¹ Koch, ii.

240, 254.

Vict. et

Conq., xxiii.

226, 229.

Plotho, iii.

459. 460.

Vaud, ii.

151, 157.

Die Grosse

Chron. iii.

199, 204.

by the repeated exhortations of the Emperor, Augereau, in the beginning of March, put himself in motion in the direction evidently pointed out by the strategical operations going forward on the banks of the Seine. Desaix and Marchand made a combined attack on the Austrian positions in front of Geneva; and, after a series of obstinate engagements, drove them back into that town, with the loss of a thousand men. Fort Ecluse was captured next day; and the victorious French, instead of following up their successes by the capture of Geneva, or extending themselves along the margin of the Lemane lake, were directed by Jourdan to attack the corps of Lichtenstein, which lay in the neighbourhood of Besançon. This diversion of force saved Geneva, and extricated Bubna from great difficulties. Meanwhile, the powerful reserves which the Allies were directing towards the Saone, under Bianchi, from the rear of the grand army, compelled Augereau to concentrate his forces, and direct them to the right bank of the Rhone, in order to make head against them and cover Lyons. With this view, he collected the bulk of his men from both banks of the river at Lons-le-Saulnier, and gradually fell back towards Lyons, which he re-entered on the 9th March. The exposed situation of an Austrian detachment at Macon, induced him, two days afterwards, to order an attack by Musnier on that town; but Bianchi, advancing in person to its support, opened a warm fire from thirty pieces of artillery on the attacking column, and they were defeated with the loss of seven hundred men and two cannon. Disconcerted by this check, the French forces fell back towards Lyons, closely followed by the Allied troops, as well in the Jura as in the valley of the Saone; and on the 18th, the Austrians, under Prince Hesse-Homburg, forty-three thousand strong, made a general attack on the French line. Bianchi and Wimpffen, with twenty-two thousand,* assailed their right, while the Prince of Wied-Runket, at the head of twenty-one thousand, turned their left by the road of Beaudeau. The French combated with great bravery, and in some points, particularly Lage-Longsart, gained, in the first instance, considerable advantages.¹ But Wimpffen restored the combat, and Wied-

* 18,238 infantry and 3714 cavalry.—*Ostereiche Militairzeitschrift*, viii. 116, 117

Runcket having threatened their left, Augereau retreated to Limonet, on the road to Lyons, with hardly any hope of preserving that city from the enemy.

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Determined, however, to retard the Allies as much as possible, in order to give time for the arrival of the great reinforcements, eighteen thousand strong, ordered in the beginning of March from Catalonia and Turin, above two thousand of which had already come up—Augereau took post across the great road near Limonet, barring all access to Lyons on that side. Musnier's division was established near Limonet, on the heights between the Saone and the Lyons road, and from thence the line extended by the plateau to Dardilly. The Prince of Hesse-Homburg made the following dispositions: Bianchi, after passing the defile of Dorieux, was to form between Dommartin and Salvagny, and push on direct for Lyons; Wimpffen was to support Bianchi, as soon as sufficient room was made for him to deploy; while Mumb, at the head of a brigade, was to follow the crest of the ridge which extends towards Lyons from Chasselay, and threaten the rear of the enemy. The whole Austrian force was forty-three thousand one hundred and eighty-five strong.¹

28.
Battle of Limonet, and fall of Lyons. March 20.

All these attacks proved successful. At noon, Musnier, seeing Mumb's brigade rapidly gaining the ridge in his rear, conceived himself cut off, and fell back towards Lyons; while Bianchi, without much difficulty, made himself master of the plateau of Dardilly, and, extending his lines along its summit, soon gained room for Wimpffen to pass the defile in his rear, and form on his right. The battle seemed already gained, as the French right and centre had abandoned their position, and were falling back towards Lyons, when the aspect of affairs was unexpectedly changed by two thousand foot and three hundred horse, who made so vigorous an attack on Wied-Runcket, near the road to Moulins, that they not only arrested his advance, but gave time for Augereau to rally his other divisions, in full retreat towards Lyons, and bring them back to the charge. A furious combat now took place along the whole line, and continued with various success till nightfall: but at the close of the action the progress of the enemy, though not decisive, was distinctly marked on all sides;² and Augereau, despairing of

¹ Die Grosse Chron. iii. 201.

² Plotho, iii. 460, 461.
Koch, ii. 256, 263.
Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 227, 232.
Die Grosse Chron. iii. 215, 223.

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being able any longer to defend Lyons, evacuated the city at midnight, taking the road to Valence, in order to gain the line of the Isère. Next day the Austrians entered, and the second city in the empire saw the Allied colours waving on its walls.

29.
Great effects
of this vic-
tory.

In these actions, from the 16th to the 20th inclusive, the Allies lost two thousand nine hundred men, killed, wounded, and prisoners: the French loss, as they were defending positions, did not exceed two thousand; but they left behind them twenty-two pieces of cannon, and large military stores of all kinds, including twenty-four thousand cannon-balls, in Lyons. The effects of this conquest were immense. It immediately liberated Bubna, who had for three weeks been nearly besieged by the French in Geneva; Marchand, so recently victorious, was obliged to retire in haste to Grenoble, closely followed by the Austrians, who retaliated upon him all that they had recently suffered in their own retreat. To complete their misfortunes, the united French force, now reduced to twenty thousand combatants, had hardly taken post behind the Isère—thus abandoning entirely the passes of the Simplon and Mont Cenis, the great gates from France into Italy—when the crushing intelligence reached Augereau of the capture of Bordeaux by the British, accompanied by a pressing order from Napoleon, that six of the ten thousand men who had been promised him from Suchet's army, should be directed to the reinforcement of Soult. This last blow broke the spirit of the veteran marshal. Deeming the cause of Napoleon now all but hopeless, he wrote to Eugene, informing him of the full extent of the Emperor's disasters, and conjuring him, in the name of their common country, to hasten with his yet unbroken army across the Alps, and if he could not avert its misfortunes, at least share its fate. Meanwhile, he stationed his troops in échelon down the line of the Rhone, from Valence to the Pont St Esprit, in order to establish an interior line of communication with Marshal Soult, and be in a situation to join him before the Prince of Hesse-Homburg could stretch across the south of France to unite with the victorious standards of Wellington on the banks of the Garonne.¹

While the empire of Napoleon was thus crumbling

¹ Koch, ii.
263, 267.
Plotho, iii.
461, 463.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
232, 234.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
222, 223.

away in Flanders, Italy, and on the Rhone, disasters attended with still more serious consequences, as leading directly to his dethronement, had occurred in the south of France. The concluding and bloody operations of Wellington and Soult on the Nive, already detailed,* were succeeded by a considerable rest to both armies. This, however, was far from being a period of repose to Wellington himself. On the contrary, his difficulties seemed to multiply even in the midst of his triumphs ; and he never had more obstacles to encounter than now, when they seemed to be all vanishing before him. The noble and heroic system of protection to others and self-denial to himself, by which, in the eloquent words of an eyewitness, "order and tranquillity profound, on the edge of the very battle-field, attended the march of the civilised army which passed the Bidassoa,"¹ necessarily, when a hundred thousand men were to be provided for, occasioned an extraordinary strain on the British finances. Such were the demands on the English treasury at this period, —from their having come under an engagement to give £11,000,000 sterling in subsidies to the Allied powers during a single year, besides arming nearly the whole of their vast warlike arrays, maintaining the contest at once in the south of France, Flanders, and Italy, and supporting a most expensive war by sea and land against America, —that it was with the utmost difficulty that government could find the means of answering them, even out of the boundless resources, and sustained by the now exalted spirit, of England.²

Above all, the difficulty of furnishing *specie* in sufficient quantity for an army of such magnitude, which paid every thing in ready money, and levied no contributions on the conquered territory, especially at a time when the prodigious armies on the Rhine had absorbed nearly the whole circulating medium of the Continent, had become excessive. The utmost that government could furnish was £100,000 in gold and silver coin a-month ; but though this steady drain was felt as so severe at home, that the under-secretary of state, Colonel Bunbury, was sent out to endeavour to reduce it, yet it was very far indeed from meeting Wellington's necessities. Some of his muleteers were two

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30.

Concluding
operations of
Wellington
in the south
of France.

¹ Napier, vi.
456.

² Gurw.
xi. 425, 427,
and 387.
Nap. vi.
470-472.

31.

Extraordi-
nary difficulty
experienced
by the Bri-
tish govern-
ment in fur-
nishing *specie*
for the
army.

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxxiii.

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¹ Wellington
to Earl Ba-
thurst, Jan.
8, 1814.
Gurw. xi.
387, 425, 427.
Nap. vi. 470,
472.

years in arrear; the soldiers, in general, had been seven months without pay; the debt owing by the English authorities in every part of the country was immense, although in the last year £2,572,000 had passed in specie through the military chest; the creditors, long kept out of their money, were becoming importunate: sixteen thousand of the Peninsular troops could not be brought into France, because there were no funds either to feed or pay them: extraordinary obstacles were opposed by the democratic Spanish authorities to the establishment of hospitals in the rear, even when thirty thousand men, wounded during the campaign in their service, required attendance; and although great benefits had been experienced by declaring St Jean de Luz a free port, yet the French too were constantly receiving supplies at Bayonne by sea; and, strange to say, the mistress of the ocean was unable to check the coasting trade of a contemptible naval force of the enemy.¹

32.
Plan of em-
ploying Wel-
lington in
Flanders.

So forcibly were the British government impressed at this period with the enormous expense at which the contest in the south of France was carried on, that, deeming the independence of the Peninsula now secured, and conceiving that the decisive point in the struggle which remained was to be found nearer Paris than the banks of the Adour or the Garonne, they seriously entertained, and transmitted to Wellington a proposal, first suggested by the Emperor of Russia, for transporting his army by sea to the Netherlands, and causing it to form the right wing of the vast array which, from the Alps to the ocean, was now invading France. It must be admitted that this project presented, at first sight, several advantages. The independence of the Peninsula appeared to be secured, and the black ingratitude of its democratic rulers held out no inducement towards making any further efforts in its behalf; the vicinity of Flanders to the British shores would enable government to augment at pleasure the army to almost any amount; an act of parliament had recently passed, authorising three-fourths of the militia to volunteer for foreign service, and there could be little doubt they would crowd round Wellington's standards on the Scheldt;² while the defenceless condition of the French barrier towns, and total absence of any considerable mili-

² Gurw. xi.
384, 385.

tary force on the frontiers of Picardy, seemed to promise to the Peninsular hero, as the reward of his toils, a triumphant and almost unresisted march to Paris.

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But while Wellington, with his usual patriotic spirit, professed his willingness to serve his king and country wherever government might direct, he justly advanced in reply, that with a British force never exceeding thirty thousand men in the field, he had maintained his ground in the Peninsula against two hundred thousand French, and finally driven them over the Pyrenees; that the frontier now invaded by him was the most vulnerable quarter in which France could be assailed; that if he could put twenty thousand Spaniards into the field, he would take Bayonne—if forty thousand, he would have his posts on the Garonne; that the latter event would shake Napoleon incomparably more than if forty thousand British troops were besieging the Dutch fortresses; and that the consequence of withdrawing the British army would be, that a hundred thousand veteran troops of a quality superior to any the Allies had yet had to deal with, would be at once put at Napoleon's disposal to act against their armies on the Seine and the Rhone, besides an equal force of reserves now forming in the southern provinces, and who, possessing an interior line of communication, could be brought into action long before the British could be brought up, after their shipment and landing, on the other side; and that their army, by such a changing of the scene of action, would for the next four months, big with the fate of the world, be put entirely *hors-de-combat*. These considerations prevailed with the English government, and they resolved to follow their general's advice as to continuing the war in the south of France; though a considerable part of the reinforcements destined for his army were turned aside into Holland, and formed the gallant though ill-fated corps which suffered so fearfully on the ramparts of Bergen-op-Zoom.¹

33.
His reasons
against it.

¹ Wellington to Earl Bathurst, Dec. 21, 1813. Gurw. xi. 384, 385.

But if Wellington's difficulties were great, those of his antagonist were still greater: for he had to contend on behalf of a falling cause and a tottering empire; to restrain treachery, and yet avoid severity; to enforce requisitions, and not exasperate selfishness; to inspire military spirit, and avoid exciting civil indignation. To do these things

34.
Still greater
difficulties of
Soult.

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perfectly had now become impossible. The hour of punishment and retribution had struck, and no human power could avert its bitterness. In vain he exerted himself to the utmost to collect resources, and assemble a respectable military force to resist the further advance of the English general; all his efforts were like rolling up the stone of Sisyphus. The urban cohorts indeed were readily formed as the means of creating a police force, and the conscripts obeyed the imperial authorities, and repaired to the points assigned for their organisation. But the people were sullen and apathetic: the whole class of proprietors were openly opposed to the war, to which they saw no end, and from the continuance of which they could not derive any possible advantage. The royalist committees were already active in the rear, and preparing to take advantage of the crisis which all foresaw was approaching, to re-establish the exiled family; and, above all, the forced requisitions excited universal indignation, and inclined the peasantry, at all hazards, to desire the termination of so execrable a system. France now felt what it was to make war maintain war: her people experienced the practical working of that system, which, when applied to others, had so long been the source, to themselves, of pride and exultation. The people of Bearn learned what it was, as so many provinces of Spain had so long done, to feed, clothe, lodge, and pay, an army of eighty thousand of Napoleon's soldiers. Such was the magnitude of the requisitions, and so unbounded the exasperation produced by them, especially standing as they did in bright contrast to the strict discipline of the English army, and the invariable payment for every article taken by them, that numbers of the peasantry passed with their horses, carts, and implements of husbandry into the British lines, to obtain an enemy's protection from the rapine of their own government; and one of the commissioners at the moment wrote from Bayonne—"The English general's policy, and the good discipline he maintains, does us more harm than ten battles. *Every peasant wishes to be under his protection.*"¹

¹ Nap. vi.
505, 507.
Pellot,
Guerre des
Pyrenees, 54.

Soult employed the two months of respite to warlike operations which was afforded by the excessive rigour of the season, after the battle of the Nive, in the middle of

December, in diligently instructing his conscripts in the military art; and, under the shelter of the ramparts of Bayonne, he was able to effect this without molestation. But the necessities of the Emperor, after the battle of La Rothière, compelled him to make a large draft from the army of the south; and, in the beginning of February, the French general had the mortification to receive an order which compelled him to send off two divisions of infantry, two thousand detached veterans, and six regiments of dragoons, to reinforce the host which was combating on the banks of the Seine. About the same time, reinforcements to the amount of five thousand men, including twelve hundred horse, arrived at Wellington's headquarters from England, and the whole cavalry of the army, which had been sent back, from want of forage, to the banks of the Ebro, was now, with the returning spring, brought up again to those of the Adour. Thus Soult's effective troops in the field, after deducting the garrison of Bayonne and other forts which he was obliged to defend, were reduced to forty thousand men; and a considerable part of this force was composed of conscripts who, though disciplined, were not inured to war, and could not be relied upon either to withstand the fatigues or confront the dangers of the serious struggle which was impending. On the other hand, the Anglo-Portuguese troops, by the morning state on February 13th, when the advance commenced, amounted to seventy thousand men, of whom ten thousand were cavalry, and the Spaniards were thirty thousand more: in all a hundred thousand, with a hundred and forty pieces of cannon—a prodigious force to be collected at one point, under the command of a single general; and, considering the discipline and spirit of the greater part of the troops, and the talents and experience of their chief, the most formidable army which had ever been put forth by the power of England.^{1*}

The security which the English general felt in commencing his military operations, was much augmented by the rejection, by the Cortes at Madrid, of the treaty of Valençay, insidiously extorted at this period from the weak and captive Ferdinand. This resolution gave, as well it might, the highest satisfaction to

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35.

Reduction of
Soult's army.
and increase
of Wellington's.
Feb. 4.

¹ See Morning State, Feb. 13, 1814. Nap. v. 706; and v. 506, 507, 525. Koch, ii. 268, 275. Vaud. ii. 160, 162.

36.

Rejection of
the Treaty of
Valençay by
the Cortes.

* See App. A, Chap. lxxxvii.

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Wellington ; demonstrating in the clearest manner, that with whatever republican ambition the government of Spain, elected under the impulse of universal suffrage, might be infected, they had not yet forgotten their patriotic resistance to Gallic aggression, nor were prepared to accept a despot from the prisons of a desolating conqueror. He was not a little embarrassed, however, shortly after, by an event as unforeseen as it was perplexing, and which at once involved him in those difficult questions concerning the future government of France, which the Allied sovereigns even felt themselves unable to determine, and which, by common consent, they left to time and the course of events to resolve.¹

¹ Beauch.
ii. 40, 41.
Gurw. xi.
547, 549.

37.
Arrival of
the Duc
D'Angou-
lême at Wel-
lington's
headquar-
ters.

The partisans of the Bourbons in La Vendée and the western provinces, had for some time past been in secret communication with the English general ; although he took the utmost pains to guard them against committing themselves prematurely, not merely from the total uncertainty in which he was as to the intentions of the Allied sovereigns with respect to the future government of France, but from the advice which he had given the British cabinet, to accede to any peace with Napoleon which might afford to the rest of Europe reasonable security against aggression.* Matters, however, were at length brought to a crisis, by the Duc d'Angoulême suddenly arriving at headquarters ; but in the critical circumstances which ensued, Wellington acted with his wonted judgment and delicacy. While showing the most marked attention to the illustrious prince, he insisted upon

Feb. 25.

* "The people here all agree in one opinion ; viz. that the sentiment throughout France is the same as I have found it here—an earnest desire to get rid of Buonaparte and his government, from a conviction that, as long as he governs, they will have no peace. The language common to all is, that although the grievous hardships and oppression under which they suffer are intolerable, they dare not have the satisfaction even of complaining ; that, on the contrary, they are obliged to pretend to rejoice, and that they are allowed only to lament in secret and in silence their hard fate. They say that the Bourbons are as unknown in France as the princes of any other sovereign house in Europe. I am convinced, more than ever, that Napoleon's power stands upon corruption, and that he has no adherents in France but the principal officers of his army, and the *employés civils* of his government, with some of the new proprietors. Notwithstanding this, I recommend your lordship to make peace with him, if you can acquire all the objects which you have a right to expect. All the powers require peace even more than France ; and it would not do to found a new system of war upon the speculations of any individual, on what he sees and hears in a corner of France. If Buonaparte becomes moderate, he is probably as good a sovereign as we can desire in France ; if he does not, we shall probably have another war in a few years."—WELLINGTON TO LORD BATHURST, 21st Nov. 1813 ; GURWOOD, xxii. 304, 305.

his remaining incognito till the intentions of the Allied sovereigns were distinctly pronounced; advised him, for the interests of his royal house, "neither to anticipate public opinion nor precipitate matters;" and would not allow him to leave St Jean de Luz to accompany the army in active operations. At the same time, when he perceived, after the advance of the British to Orthes, that the spirit of the country was more openly manifesting itself, he made no scruple in informing the British government of the change, and apprising them, that "any decided declaration from them against Napoleon would spread such a flame through the country, as would infallibly overturn him."¹

Previous to commencing active operations, there was one growing evil in his rear which it was the peculiar care of Wellington to abate; and which his mingled firmness and humanity succeeded in removing. The mountainous districts of Baigorri and Bidarray, at the foot of the Pyrenees, had suffered severely from the rapine of Mina's troops before they were sent back into Spain; and several able French generals, especially General Harispe, who was a native of that district, had in consequence succeeded in rousing a national war among the peasants of those valleys, which did very serious injury to the Allied army. To crush this dangerous example, which it had been the grand object of the English general to prevent, he issued a proclamation to the people in the French and Basque languages, which happily, on this painful and delicate subject, steered the middle course between savage cruelty and ruinous lenity. Without forbidding the peasants to take up arms to defend their country—as Napoleon had so often done in Spain, Italy, and the Tyrol—and denouncing the penalty of death in case of disobedience, he contented himself with declaring that, if they wanted to be soldiers, they must leave their homes and join the regular armies; in which case they should, if taken, be treated as prisoners of war, and their dwellings and families protected; but that he would not permit them with impunity to play the part alternately of a peaceable inhabitant and of a soldier.^{2*}

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¹ Wellington to Lord Liverpool, March 4, 1814; and to Duc d'Angoulême, Feb. 25, 1814. Gurw. xi. 547, 549. Beauch. ii. 40, 44.

38.

Wellington's proclamation against the insurrection in Baigorri.

² Wellington to Sir W. Beresford, Jan. 28, 1814. Gurw. xi. 483, 484, 485.

* "The conduct of the people of Bidarray and Baigorri has given me the greatest pain: it has been different from that of all the other inhabitants of the country, and they have no right to act as they have done. If they wish to

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39.
Reflections
on this pro-
clamation.

In this proclamation there was nothing in the slightest degree unjust: it trenched on none of the natural rights of man to defend his country. It merely denounced as pirates and robbers those who, claiming and enjoying the benefits of hostile discipline, insidiously turned their arms against those to whom they owed these blessings, and neither yielded the submission which is the condition of protection to the citizen, nor assumed the profession which gives the privileges of the soldier. Perhaps it was impossible on this difficult subject, fraught with such dreadful consequences on either side, to steer the middle course more happily; and the effect corresponded to such intentions. For the insurrection was speedily appeased; and though Wellington desired his officers to inform the people that, if any further outrages continued, he would treat them as the French had done the villages in Spain and Portugal—that is, he would destroy the houses and hang the inhabitants; yet it was not necessary to carry any of these menaces into effect.

40.
Position of
Soul't around
Bayonne.

Although Soul't's regular force in the field was little more than half of what his adversary could bring to bear against him, yet his situation, with the advantage of the now strong and fully-armed fortress of Bayonne, at the confluence of the Nive and Adour, to protect his right, was such as in a great degree to counterbalance the inequality of numbers. The fortress itself, which could be rendered in great part inaccessible by inundations of the Lower Adour, could only be besieged in form by crossing that river, and breaking ground on the right bank; and this was no easy matter to accomplish in the face of a powerful flotilla of gun-boats collected to obstruct the passage, and the efforts of an army of forty thousand men, sheltered by the guns of the place. Deeming his right sufficiently secured by this strong *point-d'appui*, Soul't,

make war, let them join the ranks of the enemy; but I will not permit them to play the part alternately of peaceable inhabitants and soldiers. If they remain quietly at home, no one will molest them; they shall be, on the contrary, protected, like all the other inhabitants of this country which my armies occupy. They ought to know that I have done every thing in my power to fulfil the engagements which I have undertaken towards the country; but I give them warning that, if they persist in making war, they must join the enemy's ranks and become soldiers; they must not remain in their villages."—*Proclamation by WELLINGTON. 28th January 1814: GURWOOD, xi. 435.* What a contrast to the savage proclamations of Soul't, Augereau, Bessières, and Napoleon, in similar circumstances!

during the course of January, drafted off the bulk of his forces to his left, in the mountains towards St Jean Pied-de-Port, and strengthened his position there by field-works. But he had no confidence in his ability to maintain his ground under the cannon of the fortress when the Upper Adour should be gained, as he foresaw it speedily would, by the enemy; and therefore he wrote to Napoleon, strongly counselling him to abandon all lesser objects, and concentrate his whole disposable forces from all quarters in a great army on the Seine, to prevent Paris from falling into the hands of the Allies. For this purpose, he proposed that Bayonne should be left to its own resources, with a garrison of fourteen thousand men; that Clausel, with two divisions, should be left in the Pyrenees to act on the rear of the invading force; and that the whole remainder of the army should march under his own command to Paris. Perhaps this was the only plan which, in the desperate state of the Emperor's fortunes, promised a chance of success. But, such as it was, it was disapproved of by him as contravening his favourite political system of giving nothing up; and he commanded Soult to maintain himself as long as he could, in any defensive position he could find, on the banks of the Adour.¹

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¹ Soult to Napoleon, Feb. 5, 1814. Nap. vi. 511, 514.

Having completed his preparations, Wellington determined to force the passage of the Adour below Bayonne, and for this purpose he collected at the mouth of the river forty large sailing boats of thirty or forty tons burden each, professedly for the commissariat, but in truth laden with planks and other materials for the purpose of building a bridge between that point and the fortress. The better to conceal his real designs from the enemy, he determined at the same time to threaten the French left with Hill's corps, and turn it by the sources of the rivers at the foot of the mountains, while Beresford, with the main body, menaced their centre. By this means, if his left, which was under the direction of Hope, succeeded in forcing the passage of the river, he hoped to cut Soult off entirely from Bordeaux, and drive him from under the cannon of Bayonne towards the Upper Garonne.² A hard frost having at length rendered the deep clayey roads of Bearn practicable, the troops were all put in motion

41.
Wellington's plan for forcing the passage of the Upper Adour.

² Wellington to Lord Bathurst, Feb. 26, 1814. Gurw. xi. 522. Nap. ii. 527.

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1814.

42.
Which, after
a slight resis-
tance, is ef-
fected.

Feb. 17.

1 Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, Feb. 26,
1814. Gurw.
xi. 522. Nap.
ii. 527, 533.
Vict. et Cong.
xxiii. 237,
239. Koch,
ii. 276, 279.

43.
Passage of
the Gave de
Mauleon.

at daybreak on the 14th of February. Hill marched with twenty thousand men against Harispe, who lay at Hellette with five thousand men, while another column moved towards the Joyeuse streamlet.

After a slight combat, the French general, wholly unable to resist such a superiority of force, fell back, and the fortress of St Jean Pied-de-Port was immediately invested by Mina's battalions. Meanwhile the Allied centre, under Beresford, advanced against the French centre under Clausel, who, in obedience to his orders, fell back successively across the Joyeuse, the Bidouze, and the Gave de Mauleon, behind which he at length took up a position. At the same time, however, Jaca, commanding the pass from that quarter into Aragon, being left to its own resources by this retreat of the French left, capitulated. But Harispe having taken post in a strong position on the Garris mountain, Wellington, who had ridden up late in the evening to the spot, struck with the necessity of driving the enemy from such a post before Soult had time to reinforce the troops who occupied it from his centre, gave orders for its immediate attack. He observed to the 28th and 30th regiments, who headed the assaulting column, "you must take the hill before dark." With loud shouts these gallant regiments rushed forward into the gloomy and woody ravine at its foot, and, clambering up the opposite side, carried the height almost immediately. The enemy, however, seeing they were unsupported, returned twice to the charge, striving to regain the hill with the bayonet; but they were beat off with the loss of three hundred killed and wounded, and two hundred prisoners, while the British were only weakened by a hundred and sixty.¹

Soult upon this drew back his troops across the Bidouze river by the bridge of St Palais, which he destroyed. But Hill immediately repaired it: and on the 17th the French on the left were driven across the Gave de Mauleon, without having time to destroy the bridge of Arri-vereta, in consequence of the 92d—ever foremost where glory was to be won—having discovered a ford above the bridge, and dislodged two battalions of French infantry posted to guard it. In the night of the 17th, the French retired across the Gave d'Oleron, and took up a strong

position near Sauveterre. Hill in consequence pushed forward his advanced posts, and was next morning on that river; but as the bridges were all broken down, it could not be passed till the pontoon train arrived, which occasioned, as the roads had become impassable from snow, a delay of several days. These decided movements on the right, however, had the desired effect of withdrawing Soult's attention from the Lower Adour, and inducing him to concentrate the bulk of his forces on the ridge of Sauveterre on his left, to defend the passage of the Gave d'Oleron. The time, therefore, having arrived for the attempt to force the passage of the Adour below Bayonne, Hope, on the night of the 22d, cautiously moved the first division, rocket brigade, and six heavy guns, to the sand-hills near the mouth of the river; and at day-break on the following morning, although the stormy contrary winds and violent surf on the coast prevented the arrival of the gun-boats and *chasse-marées*, which were intended to have co-operated in the passage, he gallantly resolved to attempt the forcing of the passage alone.¹

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Feb. 22.
¹ Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, March
1, 1814.
Gurw. xi. 538.
Nap. vi. 534,
538. Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
240. Koch,
ii. 296, 297.

The French, however, were aware of what was going forward. No sooner were the scarlet uniforms seen emerging from the shelter of the sand-hills, than their flotilla, which, from the British gun-boats not having got up, had the undisputed command of the river, opened a tremendous fire upon them. The British heavy guns and rocket brigade, which on this occasion was for the first time introduced in the Peninsular war,* replied with so quick and sustained a discharge, that a sloop and three gun-boats were speedily sunk; and the rest of the flotilla, in consternation at the awful aspect and rush of the rockets, drew off out of the reach of fire, further up the river. Upon this, sixty of the guards were rowed across in a pontoon, in face of a French detachment, which was so terrified by the rockets whizzing through their ranks, that they also took to flight. A raft was then formed with the remainder of the pontoons, and a hawser having been stretched across, six hundred of the guards and the

44.
And of the
Lower Adour.

Feb. 23.

* Rockets had been used, for the first time in war, by the British brigade at Leipsic, on October 18, 1813.—*Vide Ante*, Chap. lxxxi. § 60.

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Nap. vi.
536, 541.
Beamish, ii.
276, 281.
Koch, ii. 296,
297.

45.
Entrance of
the flotilla
into the
Adour, and
investment
of Bayonne.

² Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, March
26, 1814.
Gurw. xi.
538. Nap. vi.
539, 545.
Koch, ii. 297,
Beamish, ii.
278, 287.
March 26.

66th regiment, with part of the rocket brigade, were passed over. They were immediately attacked by a French brigade under Macomble; but the assailants were struck with such consternation at the unwonted sight and sound of the rockets, that they too fled at the first discharge. The British continued to pass troops and artillery over the whole night; and by noon next day they were solidly established on the right bank, in such force as to render any attack hopeless.¹

To complete their security, the British flotilla, under Admiral Penrose, at this time appeared off the mouth of the river; and the boats of the men-of-war, with characteristic gallantry, instantly dashed into the raging surf to share the dangers of their comrades ashore. Captain O'Reilly, who led the whole, was thrown by the waves on the beach, with his whole boat's crew, and only saved by the soldiers picking them up, when stretched senseless on the sand. The whole flotilla, when the tide rose, advanced in close order; but the long swell of the Bay of Biscay, impelled by a furious west wind, broke with such terrific violence on the shore, that several of the boats were swallowed up, with their gallant crews. Another and another came on, rowing bravely forward to what seemed certain destruction; and at length Lieutenant Cheyne of the Woodlark caught the right line, and safely passed the bar. Captain Elliot of the Martial, who came next, with his launch and crew, were wrecked and all lost, and three other vessels stranded and lost several of their men, notwithstanding the utmost efforts on the part of the troops to save them. At length, however, the greater part of the flotilla was safely anchored inside the bar. Next morning a bridge was constructed by the indefatigable efforts of Major Todd, and the troops and artillery were safely passed over.* Finding himself thus supported, Hope, two days afterwards, commenced the investment of Bayonne, which, after some sharp fighting, that cost the Allies five hundred killed and wounded, was effected chiefly by the admirable steadiness of the King's German Legion, upon whom the weight of the contest fell.²

* A curious circumstance occurred at the construction of this bridge, characteristic of the extraordinary intelligence and quickness which long campaigning had given to the British soldiers. Major Todd, who constructed

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46.

Description
of the French
position and
force at
Orthes.

While the left wing of the army was thus establishing the investment of Bayonne, the centre and right, under the command of Wellington in person, were pursuing the career of victory on the Gave d'Oleron. The pontoons having arrived on the evening of the 23d, preparations were immediately made for the passage of that river, behind which a formidable French force, thirty-five thousand strong, was now assembled at Sauveterre. Early on the 24th, Hill effected his passage at the head of three divisions at Villeneuve, while Beresford passed near Monfort with the whole centre. Soult not deeming the position of Sauveterre tenable against the superior masses which by these movements threatened it in front, drew back his whole force, leaving Bayonne, garrisoned by six thousand men, to its own resources, and took post a little way further back at ORTHES, behind the Gave de Pau, and upon the last cluster of heights which presented a defensible position before the hills, shooting off to the northward from the Pyrenees, sank altogether into the plain of the Garonne. The army was here assembled on the summit of a ridge of a concave form facing the south-west, stretching from the neighbourhood of Orthes on the left, to the summit of the heights of St Boes, between it and Dax, on the right. D'Erlon, with the divisions of Foy and D'Armagnac, and the division Villatte in reserve, formed the centre: Reille, with the divisions Taupin and Maransin, occupied St Boes and its neighbouring summits on the extreme right; while the divisions Daricau, Harispe, and Paris, stretched out on the left to the town of Orthes, guarding the noble bridge over the Gave-de-Pau at that place, the strength of which had defied all attempts, even by the able French engineers, for its destruction. The whole cavalry, with the exception of some small detachments, was collected in the low grounds in front of Orthes, where alone it could act with advantage, under the orders of General Pierce Soult.¹ Thus the French marshal had now assembled in one battle-field eight divisions of infantry and one of cavalry, which, according to their former strength in

¹ Nap. vi.
545, 546.
Koch, ii. 283,
284. Vaud. ii.
160. Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
240, 241.

the bridge, assured Colonel Napier, the Peninsular historian, that in the labours connected with it, though great part of the work was of a nautical kind, he found the soldiers, whose minds were quickened by extended experience, more ready of resource and of greater service than the seamen.—See NAPIER, vi. 542.

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the palmy days of the empire, would have presented at least sixty thousand combatants; but in the present wasted condition of the Emperor's forces, they hardly mustered forty thousand sabres and bayonets, with forty guns.*

47.
Wellington's
order of
march and
attack.

Wellington approached this formidable position in three columns. He had thirty-seven thousand men of all arms, of whom four thousand were horse, all Anglo-Portuguese and veteran troops, and forty-eight guns; the Spaniards being in the rear under Mina and Murillo, investing St Jean Pied-de-Port and Navarreins, and two divisions under Hope before Bayonne. Clinton and Hill, with the right wing and right centre, advanced by the great road from Sauveterre to Orthes; Sir Stapleton Cotton, with the cavalry, crossed the Gave-de-Pau by the fords of Caunelle and La Honton; Picton, with the left centre, was near Berenx; Beresford, with the left in the field, though forming the centre of the whole army, crossed the same river on the road from Peyrehorade, by means partly of fords and partly of pontoons. This approach to an enterprising and powerful enemy, lying in a strong and concentrated position, in three columns, extending in a mountainous country over an extent of twenty miles, presented no ordinary dangers; but the admirable quality of the troops he commanded, as well as the enfeebled spirit of the French army, made the English general hazard it without fear.¹

¹ Gurw. xi.
535. Nap. vi.
545. Koch,
ii. 285. Vict.
et Conq.
xxiii. 239.

48.
His indefatig-
able efforts
to maintain
discipline.

He was in great anxiety, however, lest, against his army thus dispersed, an insurrectionary movement should spring up in the rear; and therefore, not content with reiterating his former orders against plundering or disorders of any kind, he issued a proclamation, authorising the people of the country, under their respective mayors, to arm themselves for the preservation of order, and arrest all stragglers or marauders. Nor did his proclamation remain a dead letter; for on the night of the 25th, the inhabitants of a village on the high-road leading from

* See NAPIER, vi. 569, who quotes the numbers given above from Soult's official correspondence with the war-office at Paris. The French writers, VAUDONCOURT, ii. 160, and *Vict. et Conq.* xxiii. 236, make the numbers which fought on their side 30,500 infantry and 2900 horse. But Soult's correspondence shows that this was independent of 7000 conscripts who took part in the action; and five thousand of them were good troops.

Sauveterre, having shot one British soldier who had been plundering, and wounded another, he caused the wounded man to be hung, and sent home an English colonel who had permitted his men to destroy the municipal archives of a small town on the line of march. "Maintain the strictest discipline; without that we are lost," said he to General Freyre. By these means tranquillity was preserved in his rear during this critical movement; and the English general now reaped the fruits of the admirable discipline and forbearance he had maintained in the enemy's country, by being enabled to bring up all his reserves, and hurl his undivided force upon the hostile army. Having collected his troops in front of the enemy on the evening of the 26th he gave orders for an attack, on the following morning, upon the line along its whole extent, from the heights of St Boes to the bridge of Orthes.¹

At daybreak on the 27th, Beresford with the left wing, consisting of the fourth and seventh divisions, and Vivian's cavalry, commenced the action by turning the enemy's extreme right near St Boes, and gaining the road to Dax beyond it; while, at the same time, Picton—moving along the great road from Peyrehorade to Orthes, with the third and sixth divisions under Clinton, supported by Cotton's and Somerset's cavalry—assaulted the enemy's centre. Hill, with the second British and Le Cor's Portuguese brigade, was to endeavour to force the passage at Orthes, and attack the enemy's left. There was an alarming interval of a mile and a half between Beresford's and Picton's men; but in it was a conical hill, nearly as high as the summit of Soult's position opposite, upon the top of which, on the mouldering ramparts of an old Roman camp, Wellington with his staff took his station, having the whole scene of battle spread out like a map before him. Soon the fire of musketry was heard, and volumes of smoke were seen issuing from the ravines below, as Beresford's and Picton's columns, driving the enemy's pickets before them, wound their devious and intricate way through hollows, which a few men only could pass abreast, up towards the enemy's position. The moment was critical; and Picton, who was unsupported on either flank, felt for a time not a little anxious.² They got through, however, without being seriously dis-

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¹ Wellington to Lord Bathurst, March 1, 1814. Gurw. xi. 535. Nap. vi. 545, 555, 570. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 239, 240. Koch, ii. 285, 286.

49.
Battle of Orthes, Preparatory movements.

² Nap. vi. 559, 560. Picton's Mem. ii. 272, 273. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, March 1, 1814. Gurw. xi. 534. Koch, ii. 287, 288.

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50.
Beresford
carries St
Boes, but is
arrested on
the ridge be-
yond it.

quieted ; and Wellington, who had eagerly watched their movements, as soon as they emerged into the open country, reinforced Picton by the sixth division, and drew the light division into the rear of the Roman camp, so as to form a connecting link between Beresford and Picton, and a reserve to either in case of need.

Beresford having gained and overlapped the extreme French right, commenced a vigorous attack in front and flank on the village of St Boes. The combat at this point was very violent. Reille's men, all tried veterans, stood firm : St Boes was strongly occupied, and the musketry rang loud and long on the summit of the ridge without any sensible ground being won by the assailants. At length, when he got all his troops up, the English general made so vehement an onset with Cole's division in flank, and Walker's in front, that the village was carried ; and the victors, pursuing the beaten columns of the enemy, began to move along the narrow elevated ridge, which extended from that point to the centre of their position. Here, however, all their efforts failed. The French troops, slowly retiring along the narrow neck of land, kept up an incessant rolling fire upon the pursuers ; while Reille's batteries, skilfully disposed so as to rake on either flank the pursuing column, occasioned so dreadful a carnage that its advance was unavoidably checked. It was the counterpart of the terrific slaughter on the plateau of Craone. The fourth division, however, long inured to victory, and accustomed to see almost insuperable obstacles yield to their enthusiastic valour, returned to the charge, and pressed on with stern resolution. The long train of killed and wounded which marked their advance, proved the heroic valour with which they were animated. But a Portuguese brigade, torn in pieces by the terrible discharges of the cannon, every shot of which ploughed with fearful effect through their flank, at length gave way, and commenced a disorderly retreat along the narrow summit. The French, with loud shouts, and all the triumph of returning victory, pressed upon their rear ; the fourth division, overwhelmed by the mass of fugitives which rushed into its ranks, reeled beneath the storm ;¹ and nothing but the subsequent timely charge of part of the light division on Reille's flank, prevented a serious

¹ Picton, ii. 279, 280. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, March 1, 1814. Gurw. xi. 536. Nap. vi. 556, 559. Koch, ii. 287, 288.

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disaster on that part of the line. At the same time, a detachment which Picton sent forward to endeavour to gain a footing on a tongue of land, jutting out from the lofty ridge on which the enemy's centre was posted, was repulsed with loss; and Soult, seeing his troops victorious at both extremities of his line that was engaged, smote his thigh in exultation, exclaiming, "At last I have him!"

But the eagle eye of Wellington was fixed on the decisive point. No sooner did he perceive, from the pause in the advance of the British along the ridge, and the continued and stationary fire which was going on, that a desperate conflict had taken place on the summit, than he made the requisite dispositions, by a vigorous front attack in the centre, to facilitate the progress of that part of the line. The third and sixth divisions were instantly ordered to advance with all possible expedition up the hill, to attack the right of the centre; while Barnard's brigade of the light division was moved up to assail the left of their right wing, and interpose between it and the centre. The 52d, under Colonel Colborne,* led the way, and quickly reached the marsh which separated the enemy's ridge from the hill on which Wellington stood. Soon that gallant corps crossed the swamp, with the water up to the soldiers' knees, and, mounting the hill unobserved amidst the smoke and din on the summit, with a loud shout and crushing fire rushed forward into the opening between Taupin's and Foy's divisions, at the very moment that the former, following up their success against Beresford, were driving violently through St Boes, pushing the fourth division before them. At the same moment Picton, at the head of his two divisions, mounted the ridge where the enemy's right centre was placed, and resolutely assailed Foy and D'Armagnac on their almost impregnable position. The effect of these simultaneous attacks, skillfully directed and gallantly executed, against two-thirds of the enemy's line, was decisive.¹

51.
Wellington's
dispositions
to regain the
battle.

¹ Gurw. xi.
536, 537.
Robinson's
Picton, ii.
280. Nap. vi.
559, 560.
Koch, ii. 283.

Foy and D'Armagnac, hard pressed themselves, were unable to send any succours to Reille's wing, which—thus cut off by Colborne's happy irruption, and assailed on one

* Now Lord Seaton.

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52.
Which at
length prove
successful.

¹ Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, March
1, 1814.
Gurw. xi.
536, 537.
Vict. et Cong.
xxiii. 241,
243. Picton,
ii. 280, 281.
Nap. vi. 559,
561. Koch,
ii. 288.

53.
Soult orders
a general
retreat.

flank by his victorious troops, and on the other by Beresford's men, who, hearing the turmoil in the enemy's rear, returned with the discipline of veterans to the charge—fell into confusion, and were driven headlong down the hill, with the loss of part of their cannon. Cole's men now rushed with loud shouts along the narrow strait, strewn with so many of their dead, and joined with Barnard's brigade, so as completely to make themselves masters of that important part of the enemy's position. At the same time Foy was struck down, badly wounded, in the centre; and his division, falling into confusion, retreated down the hill on the opposite side, and of necessity drew after it D'Armagnac's and Maransin's. Wellington immediately pushed forward the seventh division, hitherto held in reserve, and two batteries of artillery, which ascended to the narrow ridge, now occupied by the fourth division and Barnard's brigade. At the same time Picton, with the third and sixth divisions, reached the summit of the ridge in the middle, driving D'Armagnac before them down the other side; and his guns, established on a commanding knoll in the centre, thundered with dreadful effect from the height, and sent a storm of balls through the enemy's masses from one end of his position to the other.¹

The victory was now secure; and it was rendered more decisive by the simultaneous success of Hill on the extreme right, who had forced the passage of the Gave by the ford of Souars near Orthes, seized the heights above, won the great road from thence to Pau, and thus not only cut off his best and only direct line of retreat, but prevented Harispe, on the extreme French left, from sending any succours to the hard-pressed right and centre. Soult, seeing this, ordered a general retreat; and the wild heathy hills which stretched out in the rear both afforded abundant room for his retiring columns, and presented several strong positions, of which he skilfully availed himself, for retarding the advance of the pursuing army. With admirable discipline, the French, having regained their order at the foot of the ridge on which they had been posted during the battle, retired in the finest array, the rearguard constantly facing about and obstinately resisting, whenever the intervention of a ridge afforded a favourable opportunity for making a stand. But the rugged

and desolate hills, as they retired, gradually melted into the plain; and five miles from the field of battle they required to cross the stream of the Luy de Bearn, only to be reached by a single road, and traversed by a single arch at the bridge of Sault de Navailles. The English infantry was pressing on in close pursuit, with a deafening roll of musketry and cannon; Hill, on their left, was rapidly making for the only bridge in their rear; and Sir Stapleton Cotton and Lord Edward Somerset's dragoons, closely following in the low grounds on their flank, were preparing to charge the moment they descended into the plain.¹

In these circumstances, although Paris with his division at first with heroic constancy sustained the onset of the pursuers, and gained time for the army to retire; yet after some miles were passed the soldiers became sensible of their danger, and, first quickening their pace as they saw Hill moving parallel and threatening to anticipate them at the bridge, at length began to run violently. Hill's men set off at full speed also, each party striving which should first reach the bridge; and although the French gained the race, and so secured the passage of their army, yet great part of their troops fell into irretrievable confusion in the disorderly rush, and the fields were covered with scattered bands. Cotton charged, on the only occasion which presented itself, at the head of Somerset's dragoons and the 7th hussars, three battalions of the enemy, which he broke, and made three hundred prisoners; but although two thousand more threw down their arms in an enclosed field, the greater part contrived to escape across the river, which was not far distant. At length the scattered bands, after wading the stream, re-assembled on the opposite bank, with that readiness for which the French troops have ever been distinguished; and the wearied British soldiers formed their bivouacs on its southern shore.²

Though the battle of Orthes was not graced by the same military trophies taken on the field as those of Salamanca or Vitoria, it was inferior to none of Wellington's great victories in the moral consequences with which it was attended. The enemy lost three thousand nine hundred killed, wounded, and prisoners, on the field, and six guns—the Allies two thousand three hundred

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¹ Gurw. xi. 537. Robinson's Picton, ii. 281.
Koch, ii. 289. Nap. vi. 563, 564.

54.
Which is ere long turned into a disorderly flight.

² Wellington to Lord Bathurst, March 1, 1814. Gurw. xi. 537. Vict. et Conq. xi. 242. 243. Koch, ii. 289, 290. Nap. vi. 563, 564. Picton, ii. 281, 282.

55.
Great effects of this victory.

CHAP. And the discouragement and demoralisation introduced
LXXXVII. into the French army by its consequences were extreme.

1814. The conscripts, in great part ill affected, and all desponding in the cause, threw away their arms and deserted by hundreds; disorganisation and confusion prevailed in their retreat, insomuch that, a month afterwards, the stragglers and missing were found, by an official statement, to be still three thousand. Thus Soult was weakened by this victory, and its effects, to the extent of fully seven thousand men—a grievous and irreparable loss, when he was already painfully contending against superior numbers and growing despondency. But its moral effects upon the south of France were still more important, and, in the critical state of the Emperor's fortunes, proved decisive. By the line of Soult's retreat, which was in the direction of Toulouse, the great road to BORDEAUX was left open: Bayonne and St Jean Pied-de-Port were already closely invested; no force capable either of withstanding the invaders or of controlling public opinion, existed from the Pyrenees to the Garonne; and the royalists in the southern provinces, relieved from the fetters which for twenty years had restrained them, were left at liberty to give expression to their inclination, which soon found vent in a general revolt.

¹ Wellington to Lord Bathurst, March 1, 1814. Gurw. xi. 540. Koch, ii. 290. Belm. i. 277. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 242. Nap. vi. 564, 565.

56.
Soult retires towards Tarbes and Toulouse.

Soult, after refreshing his army with a few hours' sleep at Sault de Navailles, on the right bank of the Luy de Bearn, continued his retreat towards Agen, by Condom, breaking down all the bridges over the numerous mountain torrents which he crossed, as soon as he had passed them. Their great number sensibly retarded the pursuit of the victors, although Wellington, regardless of a slight wound he had received on the preceding day, was on horseback at daylight on the 28th, and continued to follow the enemy with the utmost vigour. The French marshal retired towards Tarbes by both banks of the Adour; a bold, but yet judicious movement, which, albeit abandoning Bordeaux to the enemy, yet secured for his beaten and dejected army, on one flank at least, the support of the mountains, and preserved for him, in case of need, a secure junction with the forces of Suchet from Catalonia. There was not the slightest reason to fear that Wellington would advance far into the interior

of France, while such a force remained on his flank to menace his rear and communications: Frederick the Great saved his own states from invasion after the raising of the siege of Olmütz, by marching into Bohemia. The British army, accordingly, instead of moving in a body upon Bordeaux, wisely followed the retiring footsteps of their antagonists: and after taking possession of the magazines at Mont Marsan, which were abandoned by the enemy, and crossing over the bulk of his forces to the right bank of the Adour by the bridge of St Sever, which he repaired, Wellington detached Hill to the left bank to make himself master of the great magazines at Aire. Villatte's and Harispe's divisions were drawn up on a strong ridge in front of that town, and made so vigorous a resistance to the attack, that the Portuguese were driven back, and the action was well-nigh lost. But Stewart, with the British left, having meanwhile won the heights on the French right, immediately detached Barnes, with the 50th and 92d, to the aid of the Portuguese. Their vigorous charge soon altered the state of affairs; the French reeled in their turn; Byng's brigade gradually came up, and ultimately, after a severe combat, in which great bravery was displayed on both sides, the enemy were driven entirely out of Aire, the whole magazines in which fell into the hands of the British.¹

The pursuit was not continued at this time further in this direction, for great events had occurred in another; and an opportunity presented itself for striking a decisive blow against the power of Napoleon in the third city of the empire, which was not neglected by the English general. Bordeaux, which through the whole Revolution had been distinguished by its moderate or royalist feelings, had been in the greatest state of excitement since the advance of the English army into the south of France promised to relieve its inhabitants, at no distant period, from the iron yoke of the Revolution. These feelings rose to a perfect climax when the battle of Orthes opened the road to Bordeaux to the victorious British arms, and constrained Soult to an eccentric retreat in the direction of Toulouse. The royalist committee, which since March 1813 had secretly existed in that city, and which comprised a large portion of the most respectable and influential

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¹ Nap. vi.
564, 568.
Hill's Re-
port, March
3, 1814.
Gurw. xi.
548. Vict.
et Cong.
xxiii. 243,
244. Koch,
ii. 293, 296.

57,
Proceedings
of the royal-
ists at Bor-
deaux.

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citizens, were indefatigable in their endeavours to take advantage of this favourable state of things, and bring about a public declaration from the inhabitants in favour of the Bourbon dynasty. Cautiously they revealed their designs to M. Lynch, the mayor of the city, who instantly and warmly entered into their views, and declared his earnest desire to be the first to proclaim Louis XVIII. By their united efforts matters were so far arranged that, immediately after the battle of Orthes, the Marquis de Larochejaquelein was despatched to Wellington's headquarters, to request the assistance of three thousand men in support of their cause. Wisely judging that a small British force was not to be lightly hazarded on so momentous and distant an enterprise, and appreciating the importance of the movement which was now ready to take place, Wellington, instead of three thousand, sent them twelve thousand men, under the command of Lord Beresford. But as he was aware that the Allied powers were still negotiating with Napoleon at Chatillon, and that peace might be any day concluded, he was careful to inform the deputation of the chances of such an event occurring, distinctly warning them at the same time, that in the event of a declaration in favour of Louis XVIII. taking place, and peace following with Napoleon, it would be beyond his power to afford them any protection. Beresford's instructions were, to take no part in any political movement which might occur, and neither to support nor repress it; to say the British wished well to Louis XVIII., but were negotiating with Napoleon; and, if a revolt occurred, to supply the people with arms and ammunition from the magazines at Dax.¹

¹ Nap. vi.
592, 593.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
246, 247.
Beauch. ii.
52, 57.
Koch, ii.
300, 301.
Wellington
to Beresford,
March 7.
1814. Gurw.
xi. 557.

58.
The English
arrive at
Bordeaux,
and Louis
XVIII. is
proclaimed.

March 12.

Beresford, with the fourth and seventh divisions, set out from the main army on the 8th, and after crossing the wild and heathy *landes* without opposition, arrived on the 12th before Bordeaux. He had been preceded, two days before, by the Marquis de Larochejaquelein, who had announced the speedy arrival of the English divisions, and urged the royalist committee to declare at once in favour of the descendant of Henry IV. Great hesitation, as is usual in such a decisive moment, prevailed among the leaders; and many were anxious to recede from their professions, now that the time for action had arrived.

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But equal apprehensions were felt by the imperial military authorities, who, unable to make head against the coming storm, secretly withdrew, one by one, to the opposite side of the Garonne, leaving the slender garrison without any leaders. Part of the troops in this emergency followed the example, and crossed over to the other side, after burning a few ships of war on the stocks; and a battalion of conscripts which remained, voluntarily laid down their arms. At half-past twelve, the English standards approached the town, long the capital of the Plantagenet sovereigns in France, and the favourite residence of the Black Prince, but where they had not been seen for nearly five hundred years. The mayor and civic authorities, in the costume of their respective offices, came out to meet them at a short distance from the suburbs; and the former delivered an address, in which he professed the joy which the people felt at being delivered from their slavery, and at the arrival of their liberators. His speech was frequently interrupted with cries of "A bas les Aigles!"—"Vivent les Bourbons!" and at its close he took off his tricolored scarf, as well as the order of the legion of honour, and mounted the white cockade. All his attendants immediately did the same; enthusiastic cheers rent the sky; and the British troops, surrounded by an ever-increasing multitude of the people, entered the ancient capital of their Plantagenet sovereigns, hailed as deliverers and friends, to re-establish the throne of the royal race with whom they had for so many centuries been engaged in almost ceaseless hostility. Thus had England, first of all the Allied powers, the glory of obtaining an open declaration from a great city in France in favour of their ancient but exiled monarch—twenty years and one month after the contest had begun, from the murder of the best and most blameless of his line.¹

¹ Beresford to Lord Wellington, March 12, 1814. Gurw. xi. 577. Beauch. ii. 92, 96. Koch, ii. 301, 303.

The Duc d'Angoulême soon after arrived, and was received with unbounded enthusiasm; a prodigious crowd assembled to greet his entrance: white handkerchiefs waved from every window: the white flag was to be seen on every steeple; all classes felicitated each other on the change; the day was passed as a brilliant fête; and a revolution, the most important in its consequences which

59.
Arrival of the Duc d'Angoulême at Bordeaux.

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had occurred in Europe since the breaking out of the bloody drama of 1789, passed over without one tear falling in sorrow, or one drop of blood being shed. But amidst all these transports, arising rather from the prospect of cessation to immediate and pressing evils, than from any distinct hopes or anticipations for the future, there were not wanting many far-seeing men, even amongst those unconnected with the imperial government, who, without denying the intolerable evils to which it had given rise, felt profoundly mortified at this fresh proof of the instability of their countrymen, and who anticipated little eventual benefit to France from a restoration which was ushered in by the victorious bayonets of foreign powers. Meanwhile, however, the Duc d'Angoulême and Beresford remained in peaceable possession of Bordeaux; the threatening incursions of the imperial troops on the other side of the river, were repressed by three thousand British soldiers who crossed over; and although Wellington was at first not a little annoyed by a proclamation issued by the mayor of Bordeaux, in which he declared that "the English, Spaniards, and Portuguese, were united in the south, as the Allied sovereigns were in the north, to destroy the scourge of nations, and replace him by a monarch, the father of his people,"* yet events succeeded each other with such rapidity that this source of disquietude was soon removed, and the words of M. Lynch seemed to have been prophetic of the approaching fall of Napoleon.¹

¹ Beauch. ii. 96, 102.
Wellington to Duc d'Angoulême, March 16, 1814. Gurw. xi. 584, 585.
Nap. vi. 595, 602.

Soult and Wellington during this period remained in a state of inactivity, each supposing that the other was stronger than himself; for the detachment of twelve

* "It is not to subject our country to the yoke of strangers that the English, Spaniards, and Portuguese, have approached our walls. They have united in the south, as the other people have in the north, to destroy the scourge of nations, and replace him by a monarch, the father of his people; it is by him alone that we can appease the wrath of a neighbouring nation, whom we have oppressed with the most perfidious despotism. The Bourbons are unstained by French blood; with the testament of Louis XVI. in their hand, they forget all resentment: every where they proclaim and prove that tolerance is the first principle by which they are actuated. It is in deploring the terrible ravages of the tyranny which license induced, that they forgot errors caused by the illusions of liberty. The short and consoling expressions addressed to you by the husband of the daughter of Louis XVI., 'No more tyrants; no more war; no more conscription; no vexatious imposts,' have already proved a balm to every heart. Possibly it is reserved for the great captain, who has already merited the glorious title of the *liberator of nations*, to give his name to the glorious epoch of such a happy prodigy."—*Proclamation, 12th March 1814, by M. LYNCH, Mayor of Bordeaux*; BEAUCHAMPS, ii. 101, 102.

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60.

Soult's counter
proclamation,
and
resumption
of hostilities.

thousand men to Bayonne, and of as many to Bordeaux, besides those employed in the blockade of St Jean Pied-de-Port and Navarreins, had now reduced the opposite armies as nearly as possible to an equality. The forces at the command of the French general were reduced, by the desertion and disorganisation consequent on the battle of Orthes, to twenty-eight thousand sabres and bayonets, with thirty-eight guns. On the side of the English, only twenty-seven thousand combatants were in line, with forty-two guns, in consequence of the large detachments made. But the quality and spirit of the troops were decidedly superior to those of the French army. The astounding intelligence of the defection of Bordeaux, however, and proclamation of Louis XVIII. there, made Soult sensible that some great effort was necessary to counteract the growing disaffection of the southern provinces, and prevent his army from melting away, as it had recently done, from the despondency and discontent of the newly-embodied conscripts. This was the more necessary, as the admirable discipline and prompt payment for supplies of all sorts which prevailed in the British camp, contrasted so fearfully with the forced requisitions to which he was obliged to have recourse from the capture of all his magazines, and the general license in which his troops indulged after the retreat from Orthes. Indeed, at this time, he wrote to the minister-of-war at Paris, that "he wanted officers who knew how to respect property; and that the people seemed more disposed to favour the invaders than to second the French army." Influenced by these considerations, the French marshal no sooner learned the events at Bordeaux, and the proclamation of the Duc d'Angoulême, than he issued a counter address, couched in energetic language, and strains of no measured invective against the English policy and government. While a calm retrospect of the past has now demonstrated, even to the French themselves, that great part of his reproaches were unfounded, and may make us smile at the vehemence of some of his expressions;¹ yet candour must recollect the critical and unparalleled circumstances in which Soult was placed when this proclamation was issued, and do justice to the firmness which, amidst the general wreck of the imperial

¹ Nap. vi.
580, 581,
587.
Beauch. ii.
430, 431.
Soult to war
minister,
March 14,
1814. Nap.
vi. 580.

CHAP. fortunes, remained unshaken, and the fidelity which,
LXXXVII. surrounded by defection, nailed its colours to the mast.*

1814.

61.

Soult re-
sumes the
offensive, and
finally re-
treats to Tou-
louse.
March 12.

This proclamation produced a considerable impression, at least upon the old soldiers in his army; and Soult, anxious to take advantage of the excitement, and of the absence of so large a portion of the English troops at Bordeaux, determined to resume offensive operations. Accordingly, on the 12th March, he put his troops in motion; and as Wellington's main body was concentrated round Aire and Barcelone, yet divided in two by the Adour, he concentrated his forces on the side of Maubourguet, on the high table-land between Pau and Aire, designing to strike a blow at the English divisions on the left bank of that river. On the 13th he made an attempt on Pau, intending to arrest the nobles who had assembled to welcome the Duc d'Angoulême, but was stopped by Fane,

March 13.

March 14.

* "Soldiers! at the battle of Orthes you did your duty; the enemy's losses surpassed yours, and his blood moistened the ground he gained. He has had the indecency since to provoke you and your countrymen to revolt and sedition. He speaks of peace, but firebrands of sedition follow him. Thanks to him for making known his intentions; our forces are thereby multiplied a hundred-fold: he has rallied round our standards all those who, deceived by appearances, believed our enemies would make an honourable war. No peace with that disloyal and perfidious nation! No peace with the English and their auxiliaries until they quit the French territory! They have dared to insult the national honour; they have had the infamy to incite Frenchmen to become perjured towards the Emperor. Wash out the offence in blood. To arms! Let this cry resound through the south of France; the Frenchman that now hesitates abjures his country, and belongs to its enemies. Yet a few days, and those who believe in English honour and sincerity will learn, to their cost, that cunning promises are made to abate their preparations, and subjugate them. They will learn to their cost, that if the English pay and are generous to-day, to-morrow they will retake, and with interest, in contributions, what they disburse. Let the pusillanimous beings who calculate the cost of saving their country, recollect that the English have in view to reduce the French to the same servitude as the Spaniards, Portuguese, and Sicilians. History shows the English at the head of all conspiracies, all odious plots and assassinations; aiming to overthrow all principles, to destroy all great commercial establishments, to satisfy their insatiable cupidity. Does there exist, upon the face of the globe, a point known to the English, where they have not destroyed, by seditions and violence, all manufactures which could rival their own? Thus will they do to the French if they prevail. Be obedient, and yield to discipline, and reserve your implacable hatred for the traitors and enemies to the French peace. War to the death against those who would divide to destroy us, and to those cowards who desert the imperial eagles to range themselves under another banner!"—See GURWOOD, xi. 594; NAPIER, vi. 587, 589. This proclamation is one of the most curious and instructive monuments of the Revolution. The magnanimous policy of Wellington, which, aiming at moving the moral affections, coerced so effectually the disorders of his troops; the generous forbearance of England, which, an enemy only to the Revolution and its spoiliations, proposed to leave France untouched,—could not be conceived by the French general. He thought it was the homage which vice in hypocrisy pays to virtue. It is interesting to contrast this furious tirade with Soult's unbounded praises of England, at the London dinner, on occasion of the coronation of Queen Victoria in 1839; yet both were probably sincere at the time.

who anticipated him, and the attempt failed. Some lesser skirmishes of cavalry took place in front of Aire, in which the Portuguese horse sustained a trifling loss. But Wellington, as soon as he heard of this incursion, brought over the third and sixth divisions across the Adour to support Hill, and at the same time gave orders to Freyre's Galicians and Giron's Andalusians to issue from the valley of the Bastan, where they had been hitherto kept to prevent plundering, and come up to his support. By this means he collected thirty-six thousand men, including the troops on the other side of the Adour, to withstand the irruption; and Soult, fearing to attack such a force, and hearing of the fall of Bordeaux, determined to retire. He sent forward, accordingly, his conscripts at once to TOULOUSE, being resolved to try once more the fortune of arms in the strong position which was presented in the environs of that city, and commenced a rapid retreat. The British army as swiftly followed in pursuit, on both banks of the Adour, but the great bulk of their force was always on the left bank. A sharp combat took place at Vic-Bigorre on the 19th, when D'Armagnac and Paris were only compelled at length to fall back, after each side had sustained a loss of two hundred and fifty men. Unhappily that on the side of the British included the able and accomplished Colonel Sturgeon of the Engineers, whose efforts and genius had been so signally evinced through the whole course of the Peninsular war.¹

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March 19.
1 Nap. vi.
606, 617.
Koch, ii.
304, 307.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
250, 251.

A more serious action took place when the army approached Tarbes. The light division and hussars were still on the right bank of the Adour; but when they approached that town, which stands on the upper part of that stream, a simultaneous movement was made by Hill with the right wing, and Clinton on the left, to envelop and cut off Harispe's and Villatte's divisions, which formed the French rearguard in occupation of it. The combat began at twelve o'clock, by a violent fire from Hill's artillery on the right, which was immediately re-echoed in still louder tones by Clinton on the left; while Alten, with the light division, assailed the centre. The French fought stoutly, and, mistaking the British rifle battalions, from their dark uniform, for Portuguese, let them come up to the very muzzles of their guns.² But the rifles were

62.
Combat of
Tarbes.
March 20.

2 Gurw. xi.
596. Koch,
ii. 307, 308.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
251. Nap.
vi. 616

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hardy veterans, inured to victory ; and at length Harispe's men, unable to stand their deadly point-blank fire, broke and fled. If Clinton's troops on the left had been up at this moment, the French would have been totally destroyed ; for Hill had at the same moment driven back Villatte on the right, and the plain beyond Tarbes was covered with a confused mass of fugitives, closely followed by the shouting and victorious British.

63.
Rapid retreat
of Soult to
Toulouse.

But Clinton's soldiers, notwithstanding the utmost efforts, had not been able to get up ; the numerous ditches and hedges which intersected the plain rendered all pursuit by the cavalry impossible ; and thus the French, though utterly broken, succeeded, with very little loss, in reaching a ridge three miles distant, where Clausel, who with four divisions was drawn up to receive them, immediately opened a heavy fire from all his batteries upon the Allies. This at once checked the pursuit ; and in the night Soult retired in two columns, one on the high road, the other on the right, guided by watch-fires on the hills. Such was the rapidity of his retreat—as he was now making by rapid strides for Toulouse, where his great depots were placed, and on which all his future combinations were based—that he reached that town in four days, though ninety miles distant, and arranged his army in position before it on the 25th. Wellington, encumbered with a great artillery and pontoon train, and obliged to keep his men well in hand, from the uncertainty when Suchet's great reinforcement from Catalonia, which was known to be approaching, might join the enemy, did not arrive on the Touch, facing the French in front of Toulouse, till the 27th.¹

¹ Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, March
20, 1814.
Gurw. xi.
596. Nap. vi.
616, 619.
Koch, ii.
307, 309.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
251, 252.

64.
General re-
sult of the
campaign.

Thus, within six weeks after the campaign opened, Wellington had driven the French from the neighbourhood of Bayonne to Toulouse, a distance of two hundred miles ; had conquered the whole country between the Pyrenees and the Garonne, had passed six large and several smaller rivers, driven the enemy's forces from two fortified *têtes-du-pont*, and many minor field-works ; defeated them in one pitched battle, besides lesser combats ; crossed the raging flood of the Adour in the face of the garrison of Bayonne, below that fortress, and laid siege to it as well as to St Jean Pied-de-Port and Navar-

reins ; and finally brought about a revolution at Bordeaux, and a declaration in favour of the Bourbon dynasty from the third city in the empire. These great successes, too, had been gained by an army composed of so many and such discordant nations, that the French themselves were astonished how it was held together : nearly a third of which, from the fierce passions with which it was animated, and the marauding habits which it had acquired, had not yet been brought across the frontier ; which, though considerably superior when the campaign commenced, was so wasted down by the necessity of investing so many fortresses, and occupying such an extensive tract of country, that the active force in the field was from the very first little, if at all, superior to that of the enemy ; and against an army in great part composed of the iron Peninsular veterans, the best troops now in the French service, and a general second only to Napoleon in the vigour and ability with which he maintained a defensive warfare.

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It must be confessed that there are few periods in the military annals of the British empire fraught with brighter glory to its army or its chief. The brows of Wellington and his followers, loaded with military laurels, are yet encircled with a purer wreath, when it is recollected that these advantages had been gained without the slightest deviation from the strict principles of justice on which they had throughout maintained the contest ; that no wasting contributions, scarcely any individual plunder, had disgraced their footsteps ; that to avoid the pillage of their own troops, the requisitions of their own generals, the peasants of France sought refuge within the sanctuary of the British lines ; and that this admirable discipline was enforced by the commander, and obeyed by his soldiers, when heading a vast military array of the Peninsular forces, hastily levied, imperfectly disciplined, burning with resentment for the six years' wasting and desolation of their own country, and whose services it was frequently necessary to forego, to avoid the retaliation which they so naturally endeavoured to inflict on their oppressors.¹

65.
Moral lustre
of the cam-
paign.

¹ Nap. vi.
568, 569.

While these decisive blows were paralysing the imperial strength in the south of France, the progress of events in

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66.

General state
of affairs in
Catalonia.

Catalonia, though of far inferior importance, was also tending to the same general result. Since the junction of the armies of Catalonia and Aragon, and the retreat of the Allied force under Lord William Bentinck to Tarragona, in September 1813, already noticed,* the opposite hosts had remained in a state of total inactivity. Clinton, who had succeeded Lord William in the command, with the British and German division from Sicily, ten thousand strong, with nine thousand of Sarsfield's Spaniards, lay on the right bank of the Llobregat, from its mouth to the mountains; Elio, with sixteen thousand ill-disciplined Spanish troops, observed Gerona from Vecqui; while Copons' men, about twelve thousand more, besieged Peniscola, and blockaded Lerida, Mequinenza, and the lesser forts still occupied by the enemy in the rear. On the other hand, Suchet had still sixty-five thousand admirable troops, the best in Spain, under his command, and, without drawing a man from the fortresses, he could bring thirty thousand sabres and bayonets into the field. Offensive operations upon an extended scale, with ten thousand British troops, and such a disjointed rabble of Spaniards, without discipline or magazines, and generally starving, under generals acting almost independently of each other, were of course out of the question; and the English general found, that even for lesser enterprises which offered a fair prospect of success, no reliance whatever could be placed on their co-operation.

67.
Failure of
Clinton at
Molinos del
Rey, and
general re-
treat of Su-
chet.
Jau. 16.

1 Suchet, ii.
361, 368.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
252, 253.
Nap. vi. 475,
487. Koch,
ii. 309, 312.

From a failure on Copons' part to take the share assigned him, a well-conceived attack of Clinton, with six thousand men, on the French posts at Molinos del Rey, failed of obtaining complete success. At this very time, however, Napoleon, alarmed by the formidable invasion of the Allies, recalled ten thousand soldiers and eighty guns from the army of Catalonia: upon which Suchet increased the garrison of Barcelona to eight thousand men; prepared to retire himself to the line of the Fluvia, near the foot of the Pyrenees; sent secret instructions to the garrisons in his rear to make their escape the best way they could, and join him near Figueras; and strongly recommended to Napoleon to send Ferdinand VII., under the treaty of Valençay,¹ as speedily as possible into Cata-

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxxiii. § 12.

lonia, in order to give him a decent pretext for evacuating all the fortresses, except Figueras, in that province, and thereby enable him to march with twenty-five thousand additional veterans to the succour of the Emperor.

The return of part of these garrisons, however, was accelerated by a fraudulent stratagem, unworthy of military honour, by which the Spaniards now recovered some of the fortresses, in much the same way as the French had, six years before, got possession of them. There was, at this time, in the French service, a Spaniard of Flemish descent, Van Halen, who, during his employment in the staff of Suchet, had contrived to make himself master, not only of the power of exactly imitating his writing, but of his private seal and the cipher which he made use of in his most confidential despatches. He had even dived so deep into his mysteries, as to have discovered the private mark by which Suchet had desired all his chief officers to distinguish his genuine from forged despatches, viz. the inserting a slender light-coloured hair in the ciphered paper. Having possessed himself of this secret information, he entered into communication with the Baron d'Erolles, and they drew up orders addressed, in Suchet's name, to the governors of all the towns held by the French in the rear of the Allied army, directing them to evacuate the fortresses and march towards him, with a view to joining the Emperor in the heart of France.¹

History has little interest in recording the means by which fraud and artifice overreach valour and sincerity. Suffice it to say, that the orders fabricated by Van Halen were so precise and articulate, the forgeries so well executed, and the preventions taken against discovery so complete, that they deceived the governors of Lerida, Mequinenza, and Monzon, which thus fell into the hands of the Spaniards. Their garrisons, however, rejoined Suchet in safety, in consequence of Clinton, from an honourable dislike to, or distrust in the attempt, having done nothing to intercept their return. But the stratagem failed at Tortosa, in consequence of the Spanish general Sans, to whom the French governor Robert, feigning to fall into the snare, had written to come with two battalions to take possession of the place, not having had courage to do so.² Suchet thus was rather benefited

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68.

Stratagem by which Lerida, Mequinenza, and Monzon, are recovered by the Spaniards.

¹ Suchet, ii. 370. Koch, ii. 314. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 254. Nap. vi. 487, 491.

69.

But which fails at Tortosa.

² Suchet, ii. 370, 376. Nap. vi. 487, 493. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 254, 255. Koch, ii. 314, 315.

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March 3.

than injured by Van Halen's treachery, for he thereby got back the garrisons of the towns thus fraudulently won, which were otherwise beyond his reach. But having received orders from Napoleon to send off a second draft of ten thousand men to Lyons, he surrendered Gerona to the Spaniards, and drew back all his troops in the field to the neighbourhood of Figueras, there to await the issue of the crisis which was approaching.

70.
Arrival of
Ferdinand,
and termina-
tion of the
war in Cata-
lonia.
March 20.

Meanwhile Barcelona continued closely blockaded ; and a sally which Habert made on the 23d February was repulsed with great loss by Sarsfield, who commanded the blockading force. The place continued closely invested till the 20th March, when Ferdinand VII. arrived on the frontier from Perpignan, accompanied by his brother Don Carlos, and Don Antonio his uncle. He was received on the banks of the Fluvià with great pomp, and in presence of both the French and Spanish armies, who made a convention for a suspension of arms on this interesting occasion. Indeed, hostilities every where ceased in Catalonia ; both parties with reason regarding the war as terminated by the treaty of Valençay. Ferdinand continued his journey in perfect tranquillity towards Madrid, all honours being rendered to him equally by the French as by the Spanish garrisons ; and Clinton, in obedience to orders received from Wellington, broke up his army ; part being embarked at Tarragona to join Lord William Bentinck, who was engaged in operations against Genoa, and part marching across Aragon, to join Wellington on the Garonne.¹

1 Koeh, ii.
317. Nap.
vi. 495, 496.
Suchet, ii.
376, 384.

71.
But the
blockade of
the fortresses
there still
continues to
the close of
the war.

April 20.

The treaty of Valençay, however, not having been ratified by the Cortes, the blockade of the fortresses still held by the French continued ; and so late as the 18th April, long after peace had been concluded at Paris, Habert, in ignorance of that event, made a vigorous effort to cut his way out of Barcelona ; and though repulsed and driven in again, the encounter was very bloody, and cost the Spaniards eight hundred men. Intelligence of the pacification at Paris arrived four days afterwards, and terminated the contest in that quarter ; and then appeared, in the clearest colours, both the strength of the hold which the Emperor had taken of Spain, and the disastrous effect of the grasping system which made him, even in

the last extremity, persist in retaining what he had once acquired. When the French soldiers in Spain hoisted the white flag, the symbol of universal peace, they still held Barcelona, Figueras, Tortosa, Morilla, Peniscola, Saguntum, and Denia; and in these fortresses were shut up no less than sixteen thousand veteran soldiers, which, with the like force under Suchet's immediate command on the Fluvia, would have given Napoleon, when the scales hung all but even on the banks of the Seine, a decisive superiority over all the forces of the Allied sovereigns.¹

The war terminated somewhat sooner on the western coast of Spain. The only stronghold still held by the French there, after the storming of San Sebastian, was Santona, which, situated on the rocky extremity of a long sandy promontory on the coast of Biscay, had long been an object of violent contest between the contending parties; and still, in the vicinity of a reinstated monarchy, hoisted the tricolor flag. After the battle of Vitoria it was invested by the Galicians by land, and by the British cruisers by sea; but the latter blockade was maintained so negligently, and the Spanish land troops were so inefficient, that Wellington at first gave orders to Lord Aylmer's brigade to proceed thither. Though this intention was not carried into effect, yet Captain Wells, with some British sappers and miners, was sent to accelerate their operations. As usual, however, the Spaniards were so dilatory and ill prepared, that nothing effectual was done till the middle of February, when the Fort of Puertal, outside the place, was carried. On the night of the 21st, the outworks were stormed; and the direction of the approaches being now intrusted to Captain Wells, he pushed his operations so vigorously that the Fort Laredo, which commanded the harbour, was taken. Lameth, the French governor, upon this offered to capitulate in April, on condition of being sent back to France. Wellington refused to agree to these terms; but hardly had his declinature arrived, when intelligence was received of the pacification at Paris, which closed hostilities, and the place, with the tricolor flag still waving on it, was in terms of the treaty given over to the Spaniards.²

To conclude the narrative of the Peninsular war, it only remains to notice the last and bloody struggles

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¹ Suchet, ii.
376, 387.

Koch, ii.
317, 319.

Vict. et
Corq. xxlii.
255, 256.

Nap. vi. 495,
498.

72.

Siege of San-
tona, and
close of the
war in the
Peninsula.

Feb. 13.

Feb. 21.

² Nap. vi.
499, 504.
Belm. iv.
290.

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73.
Description
of Toulouse.

on the Garonne and Adour, which, though not occurring in chronological order till after the capitulation of Paris, shall be here detailed, in order not to break the account of the decisive events which led to that catastrophe. TOULOUSE, in which the French army under Soult was now concentrated, and before which the British army lay, on the left bank of the Garonne, fronting the Touch, was well known to Marshal Soult, as he had been born and bred in its vicinity ; and he had long fixed upon it as the post where his final stand for the south of France was to be made. That ancient capital of the southern provinces of the monarchy, so celebrated in poetry and romance, though much fallen from its former greatness, still numbered fifty thousand inhabitants within its walls ; and being situated on both banks of the Garonne, of which it commanded the principal passage, and the centre of all the roads in that part of the country, it was a strategetical point of the very highest importance, both with a view to obtaining facilities for his own, and keeping them from the enemy's army. Posted there, the French general was master of a line of retreat either upon Suchet by Carcassonne, or on Augereau by Alby ; while the ample stream of the Garonne wafted supplies of all sorts to his army, and the walls of the city itself afforded a protection of no ordinary importance to his soldiers.¹

¹ Chamoura,
Bataille de
Toulouse,
174, 176.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
348.

74.
Military po-
sition of
Soult there.

That river, flowing on the west of the city, properly so called, presented to the Allies a deep curve, at the bottom of which the town is placed, connected, by a massy stone bridge of ancient architecture, with the suburb of St Ciprien, situated on the westmost of its banks. This suburb, which first presented itself to the attack of an enemy coming from the side of Bayonne, was defended by an old brick wall, flanked by massy towers ; and beyond this rampart Soult had erected outer field-works. The city itself, on the other bank, was also surrounded by a thick brick wall, strengthened with towers of such dimensions as to bear four-and-twenty pounders. The great canal of Languedoc, which unites the Garonne to the Mediterranean sea, wound round the town to the east and north, and joined the river a few miles below it : forming in this manner, with the Garonne itself, a vast wet ditch, which, on every side except

a small opening to the south-east, encircled its walls at the distance of three quarters of a mile. The suburbs of St Etienne and Guillemerin, which stretched out across the canal to the eastward from the walls, were strengthened with field-works at the points where they crossed the canal; and beyond them, on the other side of the canal, rose the steep ridge of Mont Rave, the outer face of which, whereby alone it could be assailed by the enemy, being exceedingly rugged and difficult of access.¹

From this description of Soult's position, it was clear that an attack on the town from the west, and through the suburb of St Ciprien, was out of the question. The suburb itself, flanked on either side by a deep and impassable river, defended by a wall and external redoubt, could not be forced but at an enormous loss; and even if taken, the town was only to be reached from that quarter by a long bridge, easily susceptible of defence. The passage above the town presented difficulties apparently formidable; for it would bring the Allies into the deep and heavy country around the Arrege, the cross-roads of which, from the recent rains, had become all but impassable. But nevertheless Wellington resolved to attempt it, because, if successful, such a movement would detach Soult from the succours he expected from Suchet, throw back the latter general into the Pyrenees, by enabling the British to cut off his retreat by Narbonne, open up the communication with Bubna at Lyons, and compel Soult to abandon the line of the Garonne. He commenced the formation of a bridge at Poitet, six miles above Toulouse, which appeared the most advantageous site that could be selected; but the stream was found to be too broad for the pontoons, and no means of obviating the defect existed.²

This delayed the passage for some days: at length Hill discovered a more favourable point near Pensaguel, about seven miles above Toulouse, where a bridge was speedily laid down; and he immediately crossed over with two British divisions and Murillo's Spaniards, in all thirteen thousand men, with eighteen guns. This detachment advanced towards Toulouse on the right bank of the Garonne, while Wellington, with the main body, threatened the faubourg St Ciprien on the left; and Soult, not

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¹ Choumara,
Bat. de Tou-
louse, 176,
177. Vict.
et Conq.
xxiii. 348.
Nap. vi. 624,
626.

75.

Ineffectual
attempt to
attack Tou-
louse by
passing above
the town.

March 28.

² Gurw. xi.

626. Vaud.

iii. 100.

Belm. i. 280.

76.

But the pas-
sage above
the town is
at length
effected.

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1814.

¹ Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, April 1,
1814. Gurw.
xi. 620. Nap.
vi. 627, 631.
Vaud. iii. 100,
103. Belm. i.
280.

knowing on which side he at first was to be assailed, kept the bulk of his forces in hand within the walls of the town, only observing Hill with light troops. But the roads on either side of the Arrege were found to be altogether impassable; and as every thing depended on rapidity of movement, Hill wisely renounced the project of an attack on that side; recrossed the Garonne on the night of the first April, took up his pontoon bridge, and returned to the headquarters on the left bank of the river.¹

77.
Beresford,
with the left
wing, is
thrown across
below Tou-
louse.
April 3.

Wellington now determined to make the attempt below the town; but this change in the line of attack, though unavoidable in the circumstances, proved of the most essential service to the French general. For, seeing that the passage would be made on that side, he set his whole army, and all the male population of Toulouse, to work at fortifications on the Mont Rave, by which alone the town could be approached in that quarter; and with such diligence did they labour during the nine days' respite afforded them before the Allied army could finally effect their passage, that a most formidable series of field-works was erected on the summit of that rugged ridge, as well as at all the bridges over the canal and entrances of the suburbs of the town. Though, however, every hour was precious, yet such was the flooded state of the Garonne, from the torrents of rain which fell, and the melting of the snows in the Pyrenees, that the English general was compelled, much against his will, to remain inactive in front of St Ciprien till the evening of the 3d. Then, as the river had somewhat fallen, the pontoons were carried in the night to Grenade, fifteen miles below Toulouse; and a bridge having been quickly thrown over, a battery of thirty guns was established to protect it, and three divisions of infantry and three of cavalry immediately passed over, which captured a large herd of oxen intended for the French army. But meanwhile a catastrophe, threatening the most terrible consequences, ensued. The river rose again in raging torrents: the light division and Spaniards, intended to follow the leading divisions, could not be got across; the grappling-irons and supports were swept away;² and to avoid total destruction it became necessary to take up the pontoons and dismantle the

April 4.
² Belm. i.
281. Nap. vi.
631, 632.
Vaud. iii.
104, 105.
Vict. et Conq.
xxiii. 350.
Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, April
12, 1814.
Gurw. xi. 632.

bridge, leaving Beresford, with fifteen thousand foot and three thousand horse, exposed alone to the attack of the whole French army, of at least double their strength.

Soult was immediately made acquainted with this passage, but he was not at first aware of the small amount of force which was got across; and when he did learn it, he deemed it more advisable to await the enemy in the position he had fortified with such care at Toulouse, than to incur the chance of a combat, even with such superior forces, on the banks of the Garonne. He remained, accordingly, from the 4th to the 8th, immovable in his intrenched position, and thereby lost the fairest opportunity of attempting a serious, if not decisive, blow against the British army, which had occurred since the beginning of the war. Wellington, during this terrible interval, remained tranquil on the other side, ready to cross over in person by boat the moment Beresford was attacked. He was confident in his troops, even against twofold odds, and having done his utmost to avert danger, calmly awaited the result. He has since been heard to say that he felt no disquietude, and never slept sounder in his life than on those three nights. At length, on the morning of the 8th, the river having subsided, the bridge was again laid down; Freyre's Spaniards and the Portuguese artillery were crossed over; and Wellington, taking the command in person, advanced to Fenouillet, within five miles of Toulouse. Hill, with two divisions, was left to menace the suburb of St Ciprien on the left bank of the river, and the pontoon bridge brought higher up, so as to facilitate the communication between him and the main body of the army. In the course of the advance towards the town, a sharp cavalry action took place at the bridge of Croix d'Aurante, over the Ers, where Vial's dragoons were overthrown by the 18th hussars, led by Major Hughes, the bridge carried, and a hundred prisoners taken, with hardly any loss to the British troops.¹

From the heights to which Wellington had now advanced, he had a distinct view of the French position, which he carefully studied. The whole of the next day was spent in bringing up the troops, which was not completely effected till the evening of the 9th, and in preparing

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78.

His danger,
and supine-
ness of Soult.
8th April.

¹ Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, April
12, 1814.
Gurw. xi.
633. Nap. vi.
632, 633.
Vaud. iii.
104, 105.

79.

Advantages
of the French
position.

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for the battle. It must be admitted that Soult's measures had been conducted with great ability, and that his judicious selection of Toulouse as his battle-field had almost restored the chances of success in his favour. He had gained seventeen days of perfect rest for his troops, during which they had been sheltered from the weather, and both their physical strength and spirit essentially improved. He had brought the enemy to fight with an equality of force; for one-third of the British army was on the opposite bank before St Ciprien, a fortress so strong in front, and secure in flank, that a small body of conscripts might be there securely left to combat them. The main body, under Soult's immediate command, was posted on the rugged summit of Mont Rave, called the plateau of Calvinet, in an elevated position about two miles long, and strengthened on either flank by strong field-works. This formidable position could be reached only by crossing first a marshy plain, in some places impassable from the artificial inundations of the Ers, and then a long and steep hill, exposed to the fire of the artillery and redoubts on the summit. All the bridges of the Ers, except the Croix d'Auraote, were mined; and it was therefore necessary for the British army to make a flank march under fire, so as to gain the south-eastern slope of the Mont Rave, and ascend the hill from that side. If the summit of the ridge should be carried, there remained the interior line, formed by the canal, with its fortified bridge, houses, and suburbs, and within it again a third line, formed of the walls of the ancient city, planted with cannon, which it was scarcely possible to carry without regular approaches or an enormous slaughter.¹

¹ Nap. vi.
636, 637.
Vaud. ii. 107,
109. Koch,
iii. 641, 643.
Wellington to
Lord Bath-
urst, April
12, 1814.
Gurw. xi. 633.

80.
Wellington's
plan of attack.

Having carefully examined the enemy's ground, Wellington adopted the following plan of attack. Hill, on the left bank, was to menace St Ciprien, so as to distract the enemy's attention in that quarter, and prevent their sending any succours to the right bank of the river; Picton and Alten, with the third and light divisions, Freyre's Spaniards, and Bock's heavy dragoons, were to advance against the northern extremity of the enemy's line, and if possible carry the hill of Pujade, so as to restrain the enemy in that quarter; but they were not to endeavour to carry the summit of the ridge. Meanwhile Beresford,

with the fourth and sixth divisions, with Ponsonby's dragoons, and three batteries of cannon, after crossing the Ers at the Croix d'Auraote, and skirting the base of the Mont Rave, was to defile along the low ground between it and the marshy banks of the Ers, and having gained the extreme French right, to wheel into line, ascend the hill there, and assault the redoubts of St Sypière on the summit. This plan of operations was perhaps unavoidable, and it certainly promised to distract the enemy by three attacks—at St Ciprien, the hill of Pujade, and St Sypière at once. But it was open to the serious disadvantage of dividing the main body of the army into two different columns, separated by above two miles from each other; while the enemy, in concentrated masses, lay on the hill above them, and might crush either separately before the other could come to its assistance. It was exactly a repetition of the Allied cross march, on the flank of which Soult had fallen with such decisive effect at Austerlitz; * or of Marmont's undue extension to his left, towards Ciudad Rodrigo, of which Wellington had so promptly availed himself, to the ruin of the French, at Salamanca.† Singular coincidence! that in the very last battle of the war, the one commander should have repeated the hazardous movements which, when committed by his adversary, had proved fatal to the French cause in the Peninsula; and the other failed to take that advantage of it by which he himself had formerly, under Napoleon's direction, decided the contest in Germany.¹

Secure under cover of his numerous intrenchments on the long summit of the Mont Rave, and in the suburb of St Ciprien, Soult calmly awaited the attack. Reille, with the division Maransin, was in St Ciprien, opposed to Hill in the external defences of that suburb on the other side of the river: D'Erlon occupied the line on the right bank, from the mouth of the canal to the plateau of Calvinet, Daricau being at the bridge of Matabian, and D'Armagnac thence to the northern extremity of the Mont Rave: Villatte was on the summit of the hill of Pujade, at the northern corner of the plateau: Harispe's men occupied the works in the centre; from thence to the extreme right Taupin's division was placed, a little in advance,

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¹ Soult's Official Despatch, April 11, 1814. Belm. 714. Wellington to Lord Bathurst, April 12, 1814. Gurw. xi. 633.

81.
Position of
the French.

* *Ante*, Chap. xl. § 129.

† *Ante*, Chap. lxviii. § 71.

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LXXXVII.

1814.

¹ Koch. iii.
638, 640.
Vaud. ii. 107.
Nap. vi. 670.
Jones, ii.
372.

82.
Forces on
both sides.

with the summit of St Sypière strongly occupied. Ber-
ton's cavalry were in the low grounds near the Ers, to
observe the movements of the enemy; Travot's division,
composed chiefly of conscripts, held the fortified suburb
of St Michel to the bridge of Matabian; and the National
Guard of Toulouse lined the ramparts, and performed the
service of the interior of the town.¹

The forces on the opposite sides were unequal in
point of numbers, but nearly matched in military
strength: the Anglo-Portuguese around Toulouse being
fifty-two thousand, including seven thousand horse and
sixty-four pieces of cannon; but of these twelve thousand
were Spaniards, who could not be relied on for a serious
shock. The French had nearly forty thousand, of whom
thirty-eight thousand were brought into the field, includ-
ing Travot's reserve, but exclusive of the National Guard
of Toulouse; and they had eighty pieces of cannon, some
of them of very heavy calibre. The superiority in respect
of numbers was clearly on the side of the Allies; but this
might be considered as compensated in point of effective
force by the great strength of the French position, their
local advantage—as lying in the centre of a vast circle of
which the Allies moved on the circumference—the triple
line of intrenchments on which they had to fall back in
case of disaster, the heavy artillery which crowned their
field-works, and the homogeneous quality of their troops,
all French, and containing that intermixture of young and
veteran soldiers which often forms not the worst founda-
tion for military prowess.* Both sides were animated
with the most heroic resolution; for they were alike
aware that their long struggle was drawing to a termina-
tion, and that victory or defeat now would crown the
glories of the one, or partially obliterate the humiliation
of the other.²

Wellington gave the signal for the commencement of

* The battle of Toulouse being the last in the Peninsular contest, and a pitched battle of no ordinary interest and importance, has given rise to much discussion between the military historians of France and England. The former have laboured hard to diminish the effective French force in the field, while they magnified the British; and one of them, Choumara, has even gone so far as to claim for Marshal Soult and his countrymen the merit of a victory on the occasion. The British numbers in the field are exactly known, as the Morning State of the whole army on April 10 is extant, and has been published by Colonel Napier, vol. vi. 710. The French numbers cannot be so accurately ascertained, as no imperial muster-rolls subsequent to December 1813 remain. The statement in the text is founded on the detail of their army, as given by the

² Nap. vi.
670. Koch.
iii. 641.
Vaud. ii. 107.
Jones, ii. 372.

the battle at seven o'clock in the morning. Picton and Alten, on the Allied right, drove the French advanced posts between the river and the hill of Pujade back to their fortified positions on the canal; Hill forced them into their exterior line at St Ciprien; while Clinton and Cole, at the head of the 4th and 5th divisions, rapidly defiled over the bridge of Croix d'Auraote, and after driving the enemy out of the village of Mont Blanc, continued their march along the margin of the Ers, sheltered by Freyre's Spaniards, who established themselves on the summit of the Pujade, from whence the Portuguese guns opened a heavy fire on the more elevated fortified heights of the Calvinet. The way having been thus cleared on the right, Beresford, with Cole and Clinton's divisions, preceded by the hussars, continued their march at as swift a pace as they could, along the level ground between the foot of the ridge and the Ers. But the plain was found to be extremely marshy, and in many places intersected by water-courses, which retarded the troops not a little; while Berton's cavalry vigorously skirmished with the British horse in front, and a fierce fire from the summit of Mont Rave in flank often tore their ranks by its repeated discharges. Nothing could be more critical than this flank march, with less than thirteen thousand men, in such a hollow way,¹ with a superior force strongly posted on the

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83.
Battle of
Toulouse.
April 10.

¹ Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, April
12, 1814.
Gurw. xi.
634. Soult to
Duc de
Feltre, April
11, 1814.
Belm. i. 714.
Nap. vi. 940.
942. Vaud.
iii. 114, 116.

able and impartial military historian, Koch; with the amount of Travot's reserve from Vaudoncourt, iii. 107.

I. ALLIED FORCE.

Present, Effective.

4th Division, Cole, . . .	4,613
6th Division, Clinton, . .	4,877
3d Division, Picton, . . .	3,924
Light Division, Alten, . .	3,709
2d Division, Stewart, . . .	5,990
Le Cor's Portuguese, . . .	3,307

Rank and File, bayonets, . .	26,420
Officers, Sergeants, &c., . .	2,872

Infantry,	29,292
Artillery,	6,832
Cavalry,	3,600

British and Portuguese, . .	39,724
Spaniards,	12,000

51,724

II. FRENCH FORCE.

Present, Effective.

Infantry,	30,000
Cavalry,	3,000
Travot's reserve,	4,000

Artillery and drivers, . .	37,000
	1,480

Total,	38,480
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—*Morning State*, 10th April 1814; NAPIER, vi. 670; KOCH, iii. 639; and Tableau xiv. for the details.

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84.
Defeat of the
Spaniards on
the right of
the British.

ridge on their right, and an impassable morass and river on their left. Fortune seemed to have thrown her choicest favours in the way of the French marshal; and to complete the danger of Beresford's situation, a disaster, well-nigh attended with fatal consequences, soon occurred on his right, which seemed to render nearly the whole force on the summit of the Calvinet disposable to crush the column painfully toiling on at its foot.

While Arenschild's guns were replying by a distant cannonade from the lower summit of the Pujade to the elevated works on the Calvinet, Freyre's Spaniards advanced in good order to assault the northern angle of the redoubts on the latter heights. They were about nine thousand strong, and mounted the hill at first with great resolution, driving before them a French brigade, which retired skirmishing up to the works in the rear. But when the Spaniards came within range of grape-shot, the heavy artillery on the summit, sweeping down a smooth sloping glacis, which enabled every shot to take effect, produced such a frightful carnage in front, while the great guns from the redoubt at Matabian tore their flank, that the first line, instead of recoiling, rushed wildly forward, with the instinct of brave men, to gain the shelter of a hollow road which ran like a dry ditch in front of the works. In great confusion they reached this covered way; but the second line, seeing the disorder in front, turned about and fled. Upon this the French, leaping with loud shouts out of their works, ran down to the upper edge of the hollow, and plied the unhappy men who had sought refuge there with such a deadly fire of musketry that it was soon little more than a quivering mass of wounded or dying. Freyre and the superior officers, with extraordinary gallantry, strove to rally the fugitives, and actually brought back the second line in tolerable order to the edge of the fatal hollow. But there they suddenly found themselves torn in flank by the discharge of a French brigade, which they had not hitherto seen: the fire from above was so violent, and the spectacle beneath them so horrid, that, after hesitating a moment, they broke and fled in wild confusion down the slope towards the bridge of Croix d'Auraote, closely followed by the French,¹ plying them with an incessant fire of mus-

¹ Nap. vi.
640, 641.
Jones, ii. 270,
271. Welling-
ton to Lord
Bathurst,
April 12,
1814. Gurw.
xi. 634. Vaud.
iii. 116, 117.

ketry.* Such was the panic, that the fugitives poured in wild disorder to the bridge, and the French would have made themselves masters of it, thus entirely isolating Beresford from the rest of the army, had not Wellington, who was there, checked the pursuit by the reserve artillery and Ponsonby's horse; while a brigade of the light division, wheeling to its left, threw in its fire so opportunely on the flank of the pursuers, that they were constrained to return to their intrenchments on the summit of the hill.

This bloody repulse, which cost the Spaniards fully fifteen hundred men, was not the only disaster on the right. Picton, with the third division, had been instructed merely to engage the enemy's attention by a false attack; but when he beheld the rout on the hill to his left, and the rush of the French troops down the slope after the Spaniards, he conceived the design of turning his feigned into a real attack, supposing that this was the only way of drawing back the enemy, and avoiding total ruin in that quarter of the field. Accordingly, he advanced vigorously, converting his false attack into a real one, and pushed on to the edge of the counterscarp of the redoubt which defended the bridge of Jumeau over the canal. There, however, all further progress was found to be impracticable, by reason of the extraordinary height of the opposite scarp. Nevertheless Picton's men ran forward, descended into the fosse, and tried, by mounting on each other's shoulders, to reach the top of the wall. All their efforts, however, were fruitless. The troops being below the range of the guns on the rampart, were overwhelmed by a shower of large stones, arranged for that express purpose along the parapet, and at last driven entirely back, with the loss of five hundred killed and wounded. Thus, all along its northern front, the French position had been found, by dear-bought experience, to be impregnable; and although Hill had, by a vigorous attack,¹ made himself master of the exterior line

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85.

Picton also is repulsed at the bridge of Jumeau.

¹ Picton's Mem. ii. 310, 311. Vaud. iii. 115, 118. Nap. vi. 641, 642. Jones, ii. 271. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 353, 354. Koch, iii. 641, 643.

* One Spanish regiment, the Tiradors de Cantabria, in the midst of this terrific carnage retained their post in the hollow way under the redoubts, when their comrades were routed, till Wellington ordered them to retire.—WELLINGTON TO LORD BATHURST, 12th April 1814; GURWOOD, xi. 635; and TORENO, v. 463.

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of fortifications of St Ciprien, and the Portuguese guns on the hill of Pujade, and Beresford's pieces—which it had been found impossible to drag through the miry ground on the edge of the Ers—with the guns of the light division near Matabian, kept up a prodigious concentric fire on the redoubts of Calvinet, yet the French cannon on the works above, of heavier calibre, and firing down, replied with superior effect, and the strength of the position on two of the sides yet assailed was unshaken.

86.
Soult attacks
Beresford.

Every thing now depended on the success of Beresford on the extreme British left; yet he was so situated, that it was hard to say whether his divisions were not in greater danger than any other part of the army. Separated now by more than two miles from the remainder of their Allies, with their artillery of necessity left behind at Mont Blanc, out of cannon-shot, from the impossibility of dragging it forward—with their rear to an impassable morass and river, and a line of formidable intrenchments in their front—they had to ascend a sloping hill, above a mile in length, exposed all the way to the raking fire of a powerful array of artillery, backed by a formidable army on the summit. But the danger soon became still more pressing, and these two divisions were brought into such straits that there remained only victory or destruction. Soult, relieved by the repulse of the Spaniards from the pressure on his left, and seeing distinctly his advantage, concentrated his troops in hand for a desperate attack on Beresford, whom he hoped by a sudden irruption down the hill to cut in two, and sever altogether from the remainder of the army.*¹ He had fifteen thousand infantry

1 Soult to
Duc de
Feltre, April
11, 1814.
Belm. i. 715.
Nap. vi. 642,
643. Vaud.
iii. 118, 120.
Vict. et Conq.
xxiii. 353,
354.

* “Beresford's divisions marched in three lines, with their flank to us: they presented, in consequence, an extended body: the moment appeared favourable to destroy them. With that view I ordered Taupin, whose division was formed on the plateau, to advance at the *pas de charge* against the enemy, to pierce through his line, and cut off all who were thus imprudently advanced. His division was supported by the division D'Armagnac; it was aided by the fire of the works on the right of the line, in which General Danton was posted with the 9th light infantry; while General Soult† received orders to move down with a regiment of cavalry, to cut off the communication on his right between the enemy's column and the remainder of his army, and two other regiments of horse assailed his left flank. These dispositions promised the happiest result; seven or eight thousand English and Portuguese could hardly fail to be taken or destroyed.”—SOULT to DUC DE FELTRE, 11th April 1814; BELMAS, i. 715.

† The son of the Marshal.

and twelve hundred horse to make the attack, which promised decisive success. The orders were speedily given. Taupin's division on the summit of the Mont Rave, and one of Maransin's brigades from St Ciprien, were brought forward, supported by Vial's and Berton's dragoons on either flank of the enemy, and directed to fall with the utmost fury on Beresford's men, now entirely destitute of artillery; while D'Armagnac's division supported them as a reserve, and the guns on the summit thundered on the devoted mass below.

Taupin's division speedily appeared pouring down from the summit of the hill, flanked by clouds of cavalry, and half concealed by the volumes of smoke which issued from the redoubts above, which now redoubled their fire. Their generals and field-officers were seen in front of the line on horseback, waving their hats amidst the shouts of the multitude, which, mingled with the thunder of the cannon above, resembled the roar of the ocean breaking on an iron-bound shore. Impressed, but not panic-struck, with the sight, the British troops halted in their advance up the hill and deployed; the 79th and 42d Highlanders, who were directly in front, waved their bonnets in the air, and returned the shouts with three cheers: their light company, by a well-directed fire, brought down several of the gallant officers in front, and the French column halted. They immediately discharged a volley into the British lines, and advanced amidst a deafening roar of musketry and cannon. The French in column, as usual, found they could not withstand the British in line, being unable, from a few companies alone in front, to make any adequate resistance to the deadly volleys of musketry by which they were assailed. The British returned the fire, and advanced to the charge. Lambert's brigade of the sixth division, with Anson's of the fourth, dashed forward with a terrible shout, and the opposite lines seemed madly rushing at each other in the midst of smoke, which on both sides obscured the view. But in that dreadful moment the native superiority of the British courage was apparent.² The French quailed before the shock; the lines never met: and when the clouds of smoke cleared away, they were seen wildly flying over

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87.
Beresford
carries the
redoubts on
the French
right.

² Reminiscences of Camp. in Pyrenees, 293, in Mem. of late War, vol. ii. Nap. vi. 643, 644. Jones, ii. 272. Vaud. iii. 120, 121. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 254, 255. Belm. i. 284. Koch, iii. 640, 642.

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the summit of the ridge, closely followed by the British, the 42d and 79th in front, who with loud shouts carried, in the confusion, the redoubts of St Sypière. Taupin was killed while bravely endeavouring to rally his men ; Berton's horsemen, after being repulsed by the 79th, whom they furiously charged, were swept away in the general rout ; while Cole's division, stoutly ascending the hill on Clinton's left, completed the defeat of the enemy in that quarter, and not only solidly established the two divisions on the summit of the ridge on its extreme right, but threatened the enemy's communication by the bridge of Demoiselles with the town of Toulouse.

88.
Soul's dispo-
sitions to re-
store the
battle.

Thus, by the undaunted resolution of Beresford, seconded by the heroic valour of his troops, not only had he extricated himself from a situation of uncommon embarrassment and danger, but established his divisions in force on the right of the enemy's position, and threatened to take all their defences in flank. It was now Soult's turn to feel alarmed, and he instantly made fresh dispositions to guard against the danger. His whole defeated right wing was re-formed, D'Armagnac's brigade brought up with Harispe's division, and a new line of defence taken up, facing outwards, stretching from the heights of Calvinet on his left to the intrenchments at the bridge of Demoiselles on his right ; while the remaining portion of the line still retained its old ground, facing the Spaniards and light division, on the northern extremity of the position. It was the same sort of line forming the two sides of a square, both facing outwards, which the Russians at Eylau, after having repulsed Augereau's attack on their right, found themselves compelled to adopt when suddenly turned by Davoust's successful irruption on their left.* Some hours, however, elapsed before the combat could be renewed ; for Beresford, being now firmly planted on the heights, waited till he got up his guns from Mont Blanc before he again commenced his attack, which he at length effected. Meanwhile Wellington made all the dispositions in his power to take advantage of his success ;¹ but he had no reserve in hand save the light division and Ponsonby's

¹ Jones, ii. 273. Nap. vi. 646. Beamish, ii. 295, 296. Soult to Duc de Feltre, April 11, 1814, i. 716.

* *Ante*, Chap. xliv. § 70.

dragoons, as the Spaniards could not be relied on for fresh operations, so that the weight of the remaining contest still fell on Beresford's wing.

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About three o'clock, the artillery having joined Clinton and Cole's division, Beresford gave orders to advance along the level summit, towards the redoubts in the centre on the Calvinet. Cole was on the top of the ridge, Clinton on the slope down towards Toulouse; while at the same time the Spaniards under Freyre, now re-formed, advanced again to assault the northern end of the Calvinet, and Picton resumed his attack on the bridge of Jumeau. Pack had obtained from Clinton, for the 42d, the perilous honour of heading the assault, and soon the whole advanced in column to the charge. No sooner, however, were the Highland feathers seen rising above the brow of the hill, than so terrible a fire of grape and musketry opened from the works above, that the men involuntarily wheeled by the right into line, and rushed impetuously forward towards the redoubts. They were defended by bastions fronted with ditches full of water; but so vehement was the rush of the Highland brigade, that the enemy abandoned them before the British got up, and the 42d entered the redoubt by its gorge. The French, however, rallied bravely; Harispe's men, led by their gallant commander, headed the attack, and soon the taken redoubt was surrounded by a surging multitude, which broke into the work, put a large part of the 42d to the sword, and again got possession of that stronghold. The remains driven out, however, rallied on the 71st, 79th, and 92d; and these four Highland regiments, charging to the brow of the hill, fought shoulder to shoulder with such desperate resolution, though sorely reduced in number, that Harispe's men were never able to push them down the slope. Meanwhile, the other brigades of Cole and Clinton came up to their assistance; the French, still furiously fighting, were forced back; Harispe and Baurot both fell, badly wounded; the redoubt was retaken by the 79th; and the whole French column, like a vast mass of burning lava, amidst volumes of smoke and fire, hurled down the hill towards Toulouse.¹

The battle was now gained: for although the Spaniards were repulsed in their fresh attack on the northern angle

89.
Beresford
storms the
redoubts in
the centre.

¹ Journal of
42d Mem. of
late War, ii.
297, 299.
Nap. vi. 646,
648. Jones,
ii. 273, 274.
Vaud. iii. 123,
124. Vict. et
Cong. xxiii.
355.

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90.

Retreat of
Soult behind
the canal.

of the Calvinet, and Picton also failed in his renewed assault on the bridge of Jumeau, yet three-fourths of the Mont Rave was won; its central and southern works were in the hands of the enemy, and his guns commanded the whole suburb of St Etienne, as far as the old walls of the city. In these circumstances, at four o'clock, Soult abandoned the whole remaining works of the Calvinet, and withdrew his troops at all points within the second line of defence, formed by the canal of Languedoc, with its fortified bridge and intrenched suburbs. The Spaniards, seeing the heights abandoned, pressed up the slope which had been the theatre of such sanguinary contention in the earlier part of the day, and the whole Allied forces, crossing the ridge, fell on the retiring columns of the enemy; but they were arrested by the fire of the *têtes-du-pont*, and at seven o'clock the whole French forces were ranged behind the canal, which formed the line of demarcation between the two armies. At the same time Hill drove the enemy from their second line of intrenchments, within the old city wall, on the other side of the Garonne; and Picton pushed the third division up close to the bridge-head of the canal next that river; while Wellington, having thus cooped the enemy up within the city, and established his army in proud array on the blood-stained summits of the Mont Rave, despatched his cavalry along the banks of the Ers, so as to occupy the Montpellier road, the only remaining issue which was still in the hands of the enemy.¹

¹ Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, April
12, 1814.
Gurw. xi.
636, 637.
Jones, ii.
275, 276.
Nap. vi. 648,
649. Vaud.
iii. 125, 127.
Vict. et Conq.
xxiii. 355,
356. Kausler,
665, 666.

91.
Results of the
battle.

Such was the bloody battle of Toulouse, in which, although the victory unquestionably was on the side of the British,* it is hard to say to which of the two gallant armies the prize of valour and devotion is to be awarded. Situated as the French army was, assailed by superior force and depressed by a long course of defeats, the heroic stand they made on the Calvinet was among the most honourable of their long and glorious career. It is with a feeling of pride, not for England alone, but

* "The battle of Toulouse, in which the Duke of Dalmatia and the Duke of Wellington both claim the honour, was, beyond all question, lost by the former. But it was so dearly bought that the English general was in no condition to follow up his success, and might have been brought into a critical situation, if the French general had known how to avail himself of the advantages he still possessed."—VAUDONCOURT, iii. 128, 129.

for the human race, that the British historian has now to take leave of the renowned antagonists of his country in the Peninsula. Nor was the conduct of the British and their Allies less worthy of the highest admiration, assailing a force inferior in number, but in a concentrated intrenched position, and strengthened with the greatest possible advantages of nature and art. The loss on both sides was very severe, and heavier on that of the Allies than the French, as might naturally be expected in the attack of intrenchments of such strength and so defended. The former lost four thousand five hundred and fifty-eight men, of whom one thousand nine hundred and twenty-eight were Spaniards, six hundred and seven Portuguese, and two thousand one hundred and fourteen British. The French loss was three thousand two hundred killed, wounded, and prisoners, on the field; and one thousand six hundred men were taken prisoners on the 12th, in Toulouse, including Generals Harispe, Baurot, and St Hilaire, who were severely wounded.¹

Soult, four days before the battle, was aware of the taking of Paris on the 29th March preceding;* but, like a good soldier and faithful servant, he was only confirmed by that disaster in his resolution to defend Toulouse to the last extremity, hoping thus to preserve for the Emperor the capital of the south; and at the same time he wrote to Suchet, urging him to combine measures for ulterior operations in Languedoc. On the day after the battle he expected to be attacked, and his troops were posted at all points along the canal to resist an assault. But Wellington wisely determined not to trust to chance what was certain by combination. The strength of the enemy's defensive fortifications at the bridge-heads of the canal had been fatally proved on the preceding day: ammunition for the cannon was wanting for a protracted struggle, till supplies were got up from the other side of the river; and the whole of the 11th was occupied in bringing it across. The attack was fixed for daylight on the 12th; and mean-

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¹ Wellington to Lord Bathurst, April 12, 1814. Gurw. xi. 638. Vaud. iii. 128. Kausler, 666.

92.
Soult evacuates Toulouse.

* "M. Ricard was with me when I received the distressing intelligence of the entry of the Allies into Paris. That great disaster confirms me in my resolution to defend Toulouse, happen what may. The maintenance of that place, which contains establishments of all kinds, is of the last importance. But if unfortunately I should be obliged to quit it, I will naturally draw towards you."—SOULT to SUCHET, 7th April 1814; BELMAS, i. 712, 713.

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¹ Nap. vi.
650, 651.
Vaud. iil.
127, 128.
Wellington
to Lord Bath-
urst, April
12, 1814.
Gurw. xl.
638, 639.

93.
Wellington's
triumphant
entry into
Toulouse,
and procla-
mation of
Louis XVIII.

while the troops and guns were brought up to the front, and the cavalry pushed on to the heights of St Martin, menacing Soult's line of retreat to Carcassonne. How unwilling soever to relinquish the great and important city of Toulouse, containing his hospitals, magazines, and depots of all sorts, the French general felt that it was no longer tenable, and that, by persisting in retaining it, he would run the hazard of ruining his whole army.* Wherefore, making his arrangements with great ability, he left sixteen hundred wounded, including the gallant Harispe and two other generals, to the humanity of the British general, besides eight heavy guns; and defiling silently out at nightfall, managed his retreat so expeditiously, that before daybreak he was at Ville Franche, two-and-twenty miles off, on the road to Carcassonne.¹

Wellington entered Toulouse in triumph at noon on the 12th, and met with the most brilliant reception. A large proportion of the inhabitants, including the whole better classes, had already mounted the white cockade, though the intelligence of the dethronement of Napoleon had not yet been received. The people, who the day before had been under mortal apprehensions at being subjected to the terrors of an assault, suddenly found themselves delivered at once from their alarm and their oppression, and the reign of a pacific monarch proclaimed amidst the combined shouts of their enemies and their defenders. Wellington, however, who had hitherto only heard of the capture of Paris, but not of the dethronement of Napoleon and restoration of the Bourbons, expressed no small uneasiness at the declaration thus made in favour of the exiled prince, when, so far as he knew, the Allied powers were still negotiating with Napoleon. "The royal cockade," replied Count Hargicourt, "is in my hat: it shall not fall from it but with my head." Loud applause followed this intrepid declaration; white scarfs immediately waved from every hand, tears glistened in many eyes, and the tricolor flag was supplanted on the city hall by the fleur-de-lis and the

* "I am under the necessity of retiring from Toulouse, and, I fear, I shall be obliged to fight at Bazieg, whither the enemy has directed a column to cut off my communication. To-morrow I shall take position at Ville Franche, for I hope nothing will prevent me from getting through the day after to-morrow at Castelnau-dery."—SOULT to SUCHET, 11th April 1814; BELMAS, i. 721.

white flag. Wellington still trembled for the devoted zeal of the people; but at five o'clock despatches arrived from Paris, announcing the dethronement of Napoleon by the conservative senate, and the proclamation of Louis XVIII. All restraint was now at an end, and the English general could securely give open vent to the feelings which he had long privately entertained. He assumed the white cockade amidst thunders of applause: all his officers did the same. The news circulated in a few minutes through the town: the British soldiers were every where decorated with the royalist colours by fair hands trembling with agitation; and in the close of one of the longest and bloodiest wars recorded in history, was exhibited the marvellous spectacle of the white flag, the emblem at once of loyalty and peace, uniting in common transports the victors and the vanquished.¹

These astonishing events, which in effect terminated the war in the south of France, were immediately followed by a formal convention for the termination of hostilities between the rival commanders. Wellington lost no time in making Soult acquainted with the changes at Paris; but the French marshal, faithful to his trust, declined to come to an accommodation till he received official intelligence that the Emperor had really abdicated the throne. Having at length obtained that information, in a way which left no doubt of its authority, he concluded on the 18th a convention with Wellington, by which hostilities were immediately to cease, and the limits of the department of the Haute Garonne, with the departments of the Arrege, Aude, and Tarn, were to separate the two armies. The convention stipulated also the cessation of hostilities both at Bayonne, Navarreins, and Bordeaux, as well as on the Catalonian frontier, in which last quarter the boundaries of France and Spain were to be the separating line between the two armies; and the immediate evacuation of all the fortresses yet held by the French in Spain. Suchet, who had entirely withdrawn from Spain immediately before the battle of Toulouse, had already hoisted the white flag before he received intelligence of the convention concluded by Soult on his behalf. Twenty thousand veterans, in the best possible state, and of the utmost experience,² were drawn from the

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Beauch. ii.
460, 471.
Lab. ii. 431,
434. Gurw.
xi. 630. Wel-
lington to Sir
J. Hope,
April 16,
1814. Gurw.
xi. 648.

94.
Convention
which termi-
nates the war
in the south
of France.
April 18.

² Convention,
April 18,
1814. Gurw.
xi. 653, 654.
Nap. vi. 651,
652. Suchet,
ii. 395, 396;
and Report
to Minister
of War,
June 11,
1814. Ib. ii.
517.

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fortresses held by the French in Catalonia and Valencia alone, after the conclusion of the convention—a surprising proof of the tenacity with which Napoleon, even in his last extremity, clung to those distant, and to him pernicious strongholds. But before the intelligence could be communicated to Bayonne, a deplorable event had taken place, which threw a gloom over the glorious termination of the Peninsular war.

95.
Sally from
Bayonne.
April 14.

After the departure of Wellington and the main army for the Upper Garonne, and the successful passage of the Adour, which has already been mentioned, Hope exerted himself with the utmost zeal and diligence to forward the siege of Bayonne; the works before which were in such forwardness, that he was ready to attack the citadel when rumours of the events at Paris reached him on the 7th April; but as he had not yet received any official communication on the subject, he of course continued his operations. Official accounts from Paris, however, at last reached the British camp, and were by Hope forwarded to Thouvenot, the governor of the fortress, who returned for answer, that we should hear from him on the subject before long. It would appear he had resolved on finishing the war with a brilliant exploit, which was the more likely to succeed, as the British, considering the contest as virtually at an end, might be supposed to be somewhat off their guard. Accordingly, at three o'clock on the morning of the 14th, the French, commencing with a false attack on the left of the Adour as a blind, suddenly poured out of the citadel to the number of three thousand men, broke through the line of pickets, and with a violent rush and loud shouts carried the whole village of St Etienne, with the exception of a house occupied by a picket of the 38th under Captain Forster, which with heroic valour maintained its ground till General Hinuber came up with some of the German Legion. Soon after a battalion of Portuguese arrived, who retook the village, after a tremendous struggle, at the point of the bayonet, and drove the enemy back towards the works. Meanwhile the guns of the citadel, guided by the flashes of musketry, fired incessantly on the scene of combat;¹ the gun-boats, which had dropped down the stream, opened upon the flanks of the fighting columns, without being

¹ Howard's
Official Ac-
counts, April
15, 1814.
Gurw. xi.
667. Note,
Nap. vi. 653,
655. Subal-
tern, chap.
24. Beamish,
ii. 301, 303.
Vaud. iii.
132, 133.

able to distinguish friend from foe; and amidst the incessant clang of small arms, and alternate cheers of the combatants, the deep booming of a hundred guns added to the horrors of this awful nocturnal combat.

On the right the conflict was still more terrible: the pickets and reserves were forced back by the vehement fury of the onset; the troops on both sides, broken into small bodies by the enclosures, and unable to recover their companies or even their regiments during the darkness, fought bayonet to bayonet, sword to sword, man to man, with the most determined resolution. Never had such fury been exhibited on both sides during the whole course of the war; never were wounds of so desperate a character inflicted on the warriors engaged. In the midst of this scene of horror, Sir John Hope, ever foremost where danger was to be met or heroism displayed, was hurrying to the front in a hollow way, when he met a British picket retiring before a large body of French. "Why do you retreat?" cried he. "The enemy are yonder," was the answer. "Well, then, we must drive them back," he replied, and spurring his noble charger, himself led them again to the attack. The French immediately gave a point-blank discharge, the general fell, wounded in two, his horse in eight, places, and he was made prisoner. But now the day was beginning to dawn; the troops rallied in all directions; and the reserve brigade of the guards, led by General Howard, rushed forward in the finest order with the bayonet, and drove the broken and almost frantic mass, with terrible slaughter, back into the works. In this melancholy combat, fought after peace had been concluded, the British lost eight hundred and thirty men, including the gallant General Hay, who fell early in the fight; but the French loss was nine hundred and ten—a catastrophe severely felt by the limited numbers of the garrison, which, if the war had continued, must speedily have led to the fall of the place.¹

The convention prevented serious hostilities being renewed on the Lower Garonne. Napoleon had collected a considerable force on the other side of that river; and Lord Dalhousie, who had succeeded to the command of the British force at Bordeaux, crossed it on the 4th of April to attack them. The combat was soon decided: the

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96.
Sir J. Hope
is made pri-
soner, but
the sally is
repulsed.

1 Vand. iii.
133. Nap. vi.
655, 656.
Beamish, ii.
302, 303.
Subaltern,
chap. 24, pp.
350, 353.
Gurw. xi.
668.

97.
Concluding
operations at
Bordeaux.

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enemy, about two thousand strong, fled on the first onset, and the British cavalry, charging, made three hundred prisoners. At the same time Admiral Penrose, ascending the river in spite of the batteries at its mouth, burned a large flotilla at Castillon ; so that the whole line of the Garonne, from Toulouse to the sea, with the intermediate country from thence to the Pyrenees, had, before the war ceased, with the exception of the fortress of Bayonne, been wrested from the French. Decaens, who had collected eight thousand men in La Vendée and the western provinces, could not have made head against Dalhousie, who commanded above twelve thousand. The whole infantry of the British army embarked at Bordeaux, some to America, some for Great Britain, loaded with honours, immortal in fame ; Wellington and his staff soon after proceeded to Paris, to take part in the momentous negotiations there going forward ; and the British cavalry, in number above seven thousand, marched in triumph by Orleans across France, and embarked for their own country from the harbour of Calais.¹

¹ Nap. vi.
656. Jones,
ii. 279.

98.
Reflections
on this cam-
paign.

Though both the rival commanders displayed the most consummate ability in the short but active campaign which preceded the battle of Toulouse, it may yet be doubted whether the conduct of either, at or shortly before the battle, is not open to criticism. On occasion of the three divisions of the British army, not more than sixteen thousand strong, even including cavalry and artillery, being left for three days close to Soult, who had thirty thousand disposable troops wherewith to assail them—on the opposite side of the Garonne from the remainder of the army, without the possibility of sending over succours to them, from the flooded state of the river—the French marshal lost an opportunity of striking a decisive blow, such as is rarely presented to the most fortunate commander. Picton, who commanded one of the divisions which had crossed, always said that the French general evinced on that occasion a degree of vacillation which he could not have expected from his well-known abilities.² Nor did he, on the field of battle itself, act with the vigour or decision which was requisite to obtain the proper advantage, from the extraordinary facilities of his situation. When Beresford moved with

² Picton's
Memoirs, ii.
299.

his two divisions so far to the left, and separated by two miles from the rest of the army, if Soult had thrown his whole disposable forces at once upon him, he would probably have achieved as decisive a success as Wellington did in a similar situation at Salamanca. When he did make the attack, he sent forward only Taupin's division and one of D'Armagnac's brigades, a force inadequate to the encounter in the open field of twelve thousand British troops ; and by their defeat he lost the battle. Half measures here, as they do every where else, ruined every thing : by sending this limited force, hardly half of what at the moment he had at his disposal, out of his redoubts, he paralysed the fire of their guns, lest they should destroy their own men, while he brought forward no sufficient body to crush the enemy in the open field.

Wellington's measures appear, on the field at least, to have been somewhat inconsiderate. To push Beresford forward with thirteen thousand men by a long flank march, immediately under the eye of Soult, posted on the heights above with a larger amount of disposable troops, seems at least a very questionable proceeding. If Soult in person, with the iron energy of Napoleon, had struck at this detached corps when two miles off, at the head of twenty thousand men, where would the British army have been ? The policy is not very apparent of intrusting the attack of the redoubts of Mount Calvinet, the key of the whole position, to the brave but unsteady Spanish troops ; while Picton, with his heroic third division, and Hill, with another British division, were engaged, the one in a false attack on the bridge of Jumeau, the other in a distant and immaterial operation on the suburb of St Ciprien. The truth appears to be, that Soult, by a long train of disasters, had become timorous and distrustful of his troops, in all but the defence of fortified positions ; and Wellington, from an uninterrupted career of victory, had almost forgotten that his men could ever be put to the hazard of defeat. Perhaps this circumstance affords the best vindication of both ; for experience had too sorely impressed upon the one his apprehensions, and success almost justified any anticipations of triumphant extrication from difficulties to the other.

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99.
Errors of
Wellington.

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1814.

100.
Absurdity of
the French
claiming the
victory at
Toulouse.

¹ Choumara,
sur la Ba-
taille de Tou-
louse, 202.

The endeavour, however, which is made by an ingenious French writer, to convert the battle of Toulouse into a victory for the arms of his country, is altogether hopeless. It is amusing to see such an attempt made in the face of Soult's written admission the day before the battle, already quoted, that the preservation of Toulouse was of such incalculable importance to him, as containing his magazines and establishments of all sorts; and of his admission in his letter to Suchet, the day after the battle, that he could no longer maintain it, followed by his evacuation of the town, and forced march of twenty-two miles, that very night. The ridge of the Mont Rave was the elevated ground for which both parties fought: when it was carried by the British, Toulouse was as indefensible as Paris was when Montmartre and Belleville had fallen. The case of Wellington retiring from the ridge of Busaco, the day after the battle at that place,* to which Choumara¹ wishes to parallel it, is not an analogous but an opposite instance, and brings out the true distinction on the subject. The whole ridge of Busaco was maintained by the British, despite Massena's attack; and the turning their position by the pass of Sardao, and forcing them to fall back to Coimbra, was in no way whatever the consequence of the battle. At Toulouse, the carrying of the ridge of the Mont Rave and the redoubts of Calvinet rendered Soult's position in that town wholly untenable; for the British guns commanded the city, and their cavalry cut off the only French communications left to them with Carcassonne and Suchet's forces. It was the possession of the heights of the Mont Rave, won by Beresford, that alone gave Wellington this advantage. If Massena had won the ridge of Busaco, and driven the British to a position half-way down the mountain on the other side, and thus menaced the pass of Sardao, and forced them to retreat, no British writer would have thought of claiming the victory. Nor would they do so at Toulouse, if Beresford had been repulsed as Picton and the Spaniards were, and the works of Calvinet had remained in the hands of the French, and they had evacuated them two days afterwards, only in con-

* *Ante*, Chap. lxiii. § 71.

sequence of a flank movement of Wellington threatening the French general's communication with Suchet.

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All that remains to narrate, before describing the final catastrophe at Paris, is the concluding operations of Lord William Bentinck and the Anglo-Sicilian army on the coast of Italy. The second detachment of the expedition having arrived from Catalonia, Bentinck, being now at the head of twelve thousand men, moved forward by the coast of the Mediterranean to La Spezia, which was occupied on the 29th March. Thence he advanced by the coast road, through the romantic defiles of the Apennines, so well known to travellers, to Sestri, where the enemy's forces, about six thousand strong, were posted. From this strong position, however, the French were driven with great loss on the 8th; and from thence the Allies advanced, fighting at every step, and gradually forcing their way through the ravines in the mountains till the 13th, when General Montresor established himself in an advanced position near the town; and on the 16th the whole army was concentrated in front of Genoa. The enemy were there very strongly posted on the almost inaccessible ridges which surround that noble city, supported by forts and external works, their left resting on the castles of Richelieu and Tecla, their centre in the village of San Martino, and their right on the sea; the whole line passing through a country thickly studded with gardens, villas, enclosures, and all the impediments of suburban scenery.¹

101.
Lord Wm.
Bentinck's
operations
against
Genoa.

March 49.

April 8.

April 16.

1 Ann. Reg.
1814, p. 191.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
345, 346.
Botta, iv.
481.

Such, however, was the vigour of the attack on the day following, being the 17th, that the whole position was speedily carried: the second battalion of the third Italian regiment stormed Fort Tecla; another battalion of the same regiment, with a body of Calabrese, surmounted the rocky heights above Fort Richelieu, and compelled the garrison to capitulate. The French upon this retired within the town, and the Allies took up a position within six hundred yards of the ramparts, where preparations were immediately made for establishing breaching batteries, and carrying the place by assault. To prevent such a catastrophe, the governor proposed to

102.
Which capi-
tulates after
the external
forts had been
stormed.

April 18.

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¹ Bentinck's
Official Ac-
count, April
20, 1814.
Ann. Reg.
p. 191. App.
to Chron.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
345, 347.
Botta, iv.
481, 482.

103.

Concluding
operations of
the Allies in
Italy.

April 7.

April 13.

April 14.

capitulate; and after some difficulties about the terms, a convention was concluded, in virtue of which the French garrison was to march out with the honours of war and six pieces of cannon, and retire to Nice. The same day the British took possession; and thus was this magnificent fortress, which, under Massena in 1800, had held out so long against the Austrians, at once carried by the English forces, with immense stores of every kind, and two ships of the line and four brigs; all with the loss only of forty killed and a hundred and sixty wounded.¹

In the proceedings which immediately followed this important acquisition, Bentinck, without any authority from his government, gave the inhabitants reason to believe that it was the intention of the Allies to restore them to their former state of independence and republican government, as they had existed before the French Revolution.* These announcements excited unbounded joy and gratitude at the time, and gave rise to proportional dissatisfaction, when considerations of general policy, and, in fact, absolute necessity, rendered it unavoidable to incorporate them, even against their will, with the Sardinian monarchy. Meanwhile, the Austrian general Bellegarde signed a convention with Murat, providing for the more vigorous prosecution of the war on the Po, and the final expulsion of the French from Italy. But the King of Naples, anxious to gain time, and to see the course of events on the Seine before he adopted a decisive course on the Po, adjourned, on various pretexts, the performance of his part of the contract; and it was not till the 13th that Bellegarde succeeded in prevailing upon him to put his troops in motion. On that day, however, he forced the Taro, after a vigorous resistance on the part of the French general Maucune; and on the day following the passage

* "Warriors of Italy! only call and we will hasten to your relief; and then Italy, by our united efforts, shall become what she was in her most prosperous period, and what Spain now is."—LORD W. BENTINCK'S *Proclamation*, March 14, 1814. "Considering that the general wish of the Genoese is to return to their ancient form of government, I declare: 1. That the constitution of the Genoese States, such as it existed in 1797, with those modifications which the general wish, the public good, and the spirit of the original constitution of 1797 seem to require, is re-established."—LORD W. BENTINCK'S *Proclamation*, April 26, 1814; *Parl. Deb.* xxx. 393, 394. These proclamations were at variance with Bentinck's instructions, which were to do nothing that might fetter the hands of the Allies, in the final disposal of the Genoese territories.

of the Stura was also effected, after a sharp conflict. These actions, in which the French lost fifteen hundred men, were of sinister augury to the cause of the Viceroy in Italy; but the further prosecution of hostilities was prevented by the intelligence which arrived next day, of the capitulation of Paris and dethronement of Napoleon. A convention was immediately concluded with the Austrian generals; in virtue of which Palma-Nuova, Osopo, Venice, and Legnago, were immediately surrendered to their troops. Eugene's armaments were soon after dissolved; every thing was placed on a new footing; the whole of Lombardy was occupied by the Germans; and in the first week of May the French troops FINALLY REPASSED THE ALPS, not without casting from the summit of Mont Cenis a "longing, lingering look behind" at that classic land, which they had won by their valour and lost by their oppression.¹

CHAP.
LXXXVII
1814.

April 17.

¹ Koch, ii.
278. Vict.
et Conq.
xxiii. 346,
348. Botta,
v. 479.

To complete the picture of the French empire, as it was submitted to the consideration of Napoleon at Rheims in the middle of March, when he took his final determination as to the congress of Chatillon, it only remains to cast a last glance over the vast fortresses, once the bulwarks of his mighty dominions, which still remained in the hands of his generals on the other side of the Rhine. Glogau, blockaded since the 17th August 1813, capitulated from want of provisions on the 10th April, and the garrison, still three thousand three hundred strong, became prisoners of war. Cüstrin fell on the 30th March, with its garrison of three thousand. Wittenberg had been more actively besieged: trenches were opened against it in the beginning of January; and it was carried by assault on the 15th, fifteen hundred men having been made prisoners. The citadel of Würzburg fell, as did the two of Erfurth, long closely blockaded—the former on the 21st March, with fifteen hundred men; the latter, with two thousand, in the beginning of May. Magdeburg, with its garrison, now swelled by stragglers from the French army, who had sought refuge within its walls after the retreat from the Elbe, to eighteen thousand men, presented a more important object. The blockade was loosely maintained by successive bodies of Allied troops as they advanced from Russia, or were

104.
State and
final surren-
der of the
fortresses in
Germany
still held by
the French.

April 10.

March 30.

Jan. 15.

CHAP.
LXXXVII.
1814.

¹ Plottho, iii.
502, 513.
Vaud. 136,
139. Vict.
et Conq.
xxiii. 349,
350.

105.
Operations
under Ben-
ningsen
against
Davoust in
Hamburg.

Feb. 9, 17,
24, and Mar.
5, 11.

equipped in the adjoining provinces of Prussia, from the 26th of October till the final capitulation took place in the middle of May. Several sorties were made to collect provisions, particularly in the beginning of January, and on the 1st of April; on which last occasion, eight thousand men were engaged in the attack, and were not repulsed without considerable difficulty. An armistice was concluded on the 14th April, as soon as the events at Paris were known; but it was not till the 19th May that the place was finally evacuated, when General Lemarrois led back to France the divisions Lanusse and Lemoine, still fourteen thousand strong, besides four thousand Italians, Spaniards, and Croatians, who were dismissed to their respective homes.¹

Davoust, in Hamburg, as already noticed, had been blockaded by Benningsen, with a large part of the Russian army of reserve, immediately after the battle of Leipsic. General Strogonoff at first had the command, but he was replaced in the end of January by Benningsen in person, who thenceforward took the direction of that important operation. On the 20th January, a serious attack took place on the fort of Harburg, and the island of Wilhelmsburg: the first proved successful, but in the latter the Russians were repulsed with the loss of seven hundred men. The hard frost which now succeeded, so well known and severely felt over all Europe, having completely frozen the Elbe, the Russian general resolved to take advantage of it to effect the reduction of the island of Wilhelmsburg, without the command of which he had become sensible that no operations, with any degree of certainty, could be carried on against the body of the fortress. Repeated attacks took place on the 9th, 17th, and 24th of February, and on the 5th and 11th of March. But such was the tenacity of Marshal Davoust, and the vigour of his resistance, that, although the Russians repeatedly got footing in the island, they were always, in the end, repulsed with very severe loss. Upwards of four thousand men were lost to both sides in these bloody combats, which led to no decisive results; and at length Benningesen, despairing of dispossessing the enemy by main force, strengthened the blockade, and trusted to the slower and more certain effects of disease and scarcity. The city,

already pillaged and woe-struck to an unparalleled degree by the merciless exactions of the French marshal, was now threatened with the combined horrors of plague, pestilence, and famine, when a period was fortunately put to its sufferings by the fall of Napoleon, which was followed by a suspension of arms on the 18th April. In consequence of that event the garrison, in the end of May, still thirteen thousand strong, besides three thousand sick and wounded in the hospitals, set out on their return to France. Wesel, with its garrison of ten thousand men, long blockaded by Borstel's Prussians, was finally evacuated on the 10th May.¹

Thus, while Napoleon at Rheims, with his heroic band of followers, not forty thousand strong, was maintaining a doubtful struggle with the vast masses of the allied forces, above seventy thousand of his veteran troops were blockaded in the fortresses still held by his lieutenants beyond the Rhine and the Pyrenees*—an extraordinary fact, and speaking volumes as to the disastrous effect which the obstinate retention of those distant strongholds had upon the fortunes of the empire. Nor is there any foundation for the remark, that if the Emperor had withdrawn these garrisons to augment his forces in the interior, the blockading troops would have formed an equal or greater addition to the armies of the Allies. For these besieging corps, though very numerous, were for the most part composed of landwehr and new levies, wholly unfit for operations in the field, though perfectly adequate to the duties of a blockade, while the garrisons they held in check were the best troops at that period in the French service. The armies, too, with which the Allies invaded France, were so numerous, that it was with the utmost difficulty they could find subsistence, and an additional host of mouths would have been an encumbrance rather

CHAP.
LXXXVII.

1814.

April 18.

¹ Plottho, iii.
515, 521.
Vaud. iii.
139, 141.

106.

Reflections
on the impo-
sibility of Napo-
leon's cling-
ing so tena-
ciously to
these for-
tresses.

* Viz:—

In Catalonia and Santona, (<i>Ante</i> , Chap. lxxxvii. § 71.)	21,500
Hamburg, - - - - -	16,000
Wesel, - - - - -	10,000
Cüstrin, - - - - -	3,000
Wittenberg, - - - - -	1,500
Magdeburg, - - - - -	18,000
Würtzburg, - - - - -	1,500
Erfurth, - - - - -	2,000

Total,

73,500

—VAUDONCOURT, iii. 136, 141; SUCHET, ii. 517.

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CHAP.
LXXXVII.

1814.

than an advantage ; whereas seventy thousand veterans added to Napoleon's armies in the plains of Champagne, might have hurled back the Allies with disgrace to the Rhine.

107.
Its disastrous
effect on his
fortunes in
the last re-
sult.

It was want of men—the utter exhaustion of his military resources—which in the end proved his ruin. And yet, at that very time, he had veteran soldiers in abundance, voluntarily exiled by him from their country. Perplexed and wearisome as the details of the breaking up, in all its extent, of so immense a dominion necessarily are, the pains of investigating them will not be deemed lost when it leads to such a result as this ; and demonstrates the decisive influence which the necessity of nowhere receding, and maintaining to the last the principle “*tout ou rien*,” had upon the ultimate fate of the Revolution. Dark and mournful, however, as was the intelligence which on every side pressed on the Emperor at Rheims, it had no effect in shaking his determination. The disasters which have been enumerated, which accumulated “round a sinking throne and falling empire,” were all, with the exception of the taking of Lyons and Genoa, and the battle of Toulouse, known to him when he took his final resolution to refuse the terms proposed to him at Chatillon ; but still he would not consent to abandon Antwerp and the frontier of the Rhine.¹

¹ Fain, 170,
171.

108.
Final terms
proposed to
Napoleon at
Chatillon.

The terms which the Allied sovereigns proposed to Napoleon in the close of the conferences at Chatillon, were the cession, by Napoleon, of the whole conquests made by France since 1792 : the abandonment of the title of Protector of the Confederation of the Rhine, Mediator of Switzerland, and King of Italy : the reconstruction of all the countries adjoining France in an independent form : in particular, the organisation of Germany in a federal union ; of Italy in independent states, between the Austrian possessions and the French frontier ; the independence of Switzerland as a separate republic ; the formation of a kingdom in Holland for the house of Orange ; and lastly, the restoration of the Peninsular thrones to the houses of Braganza and Bourbon. In return for these demands, the British government consented to restore the whole French colonies conquered by them during the war, with the exception of the isles of Saintes and Tobago in the

West, and the isles of Mauritius and Bourbon in the East Indies. Malta was to remain in the hands of the English; but Sweden and Portugal were to restore Guadaloupe and Cayenne. So noble and disinterested was the use which Great Britain made of the immense sacrifices, and unbounded ultimate triumphs of the war, that all the exactions she required of France were for the security of her continental Allies; and peace was to bring to Napoleon a restitution of fully four-fifths of the conquests which Great Britain had made of his transmarine possessions. On these terms the Allies offered to recognise Napoleon as Emperor of France, and immediately conclude peace, leaving him as great an empire as had been enjoyed by Louis XIV.; and to possess which, Frederick the Great said, was "the brightest dream which a sovereign could form." * 1 *

CHAP.
LXXXVII.
1814.

1 Project of
Allies, Feb.
9. Koch, ii.
236, 343.
Cap. x. 377.
Fain, 327.

Napoleon having declined to accede to these conditions, Caulaincourt, after a great many delays thrown in the way, to gain time for the military successes of the Emperor to influence in the manner he desired the progress of the negotiations, at length on the 10th March gave in what he termed a counter-project; but which, in effect, was nothing but an able argument on the part of the French government against the terms proposed by the Allies. "The powers declared," said he, "only three months ago at Frankfort, that they wished to establish a just equilibrium in Europe. They profess the same desire now. To maintain the same *relative* position which she always enjoyed; is the only real wish of France. But Europe does not at this time resemble what she was twenty years ago. At that period the kingdom of Poland, already partitioned, disappeared entirely; the immense empire of Russia received vast and rich provinces; six millions of men were added to dominions already more extensive than any sovereign in Europe enjoyed; while

109.
Counter-
statement by
Napoleon.
March 10.

* "I will always hold to you the same language; it should be appreciated by men of sense who really desire the good of their country. We have but one wish, that of peace; but that peace is impossible, if you will not make the sacrifices necessary to regain your possessions beyond the seas. To arrive at that peace, it is necessary to be equally prepared for the means by which it is to be obtained, and not to forget that England disposes *alone* of all the compensations possible; and that, in agreeing to denude herself in favour of France, *of almost the whole of her conquests*, she is entitled to insist that France shall be replaced on a level with the other great powers on the Continent."—METTERNICH to CAULAINCOURT, March 8th, 1814; FAIN, 305, 306; *Pièces Just.*

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LXXXVII.

1814.

nine millions fell to the lot of Austria and Prussia. Soon the face of Germany was changed. The ecclesiastical states and most of the free cities were divided among the secular princes; Prussia and Austria received the greater part of them. The ancient republic of Venice became a province of Austria: two millions of subjects, with new territories and new resources, were given to Russia by the treaty of Tilsit, by that of Vienna, by that of Yassi, by that of Abo. On her own side, and during the same period, England has not only acquired the Dutch possessions of Ceylon and Trinidad, but she has doubled her territories in India, and gained an empire there which two of the greatest monarchies in Europe would hardly equal.

110.
His able
argument
against the
Allied terms.

"If the population of that empire cannot be considered as an addition to the inhabitants of Great Britain,—on the other hand, she has acquired by their sovereignty and commerce an immense increase of riches, the other great element of power. Russia and England have preserved all that they have acquired; Austria and Prussia have, it is true, sustained losses; but do they abandon all thoughts of repairing them? or will they be now contented with the possessions which they enjoyed before the war? When all has thus changed around France, can it maintain the same relative power, if it is reduced to its original limits? Replaced in its original state, it would be far from enjoying the same influence or security, when the power of its neighbours has so immensely increased. England can only be attacked by sea: Russia, backed by the pole, and flanked on either side by inaccessible and boundless solitudes, can be invaded, since the acquisition of Finland, only on one side. France, half commercial and half territorial, is open to attack on all sides both by sea and land, on both which elements she is brought immediately in contact with valiant nations."¹

¹ Contre-pro-
jet de Cau-
laincourt,
March 10,
1814. Fain,
335.

111.
Caulaincourt
at length
gives in a
counter-pro-
ject.

The Allied plenipotentiaries, upon receiving this counter-project, declared that this memoir was no answer to their ultimatum, and were on the point of breaking up the conferences; when Caulaincourt, overwhelmed with apprehension at the immediate and probable result of such a rupture, proposed verbally, on the part of the Emperor, that he should renounce all supremacy or constitutional

influence in countries beyond the limits of France ; to recognise the independence of Spain in its old limits, under the sovereignty of Ferdinand VII. ; to admit the independence of Switzerland, under the guarantee of the Allied powers ; the independence of Germany under its native princes, and of Holland, under the sovereignty of the Prince of Orange. This was followed three days afterwards by a more detailed counter-project on the part of Napoleon, of the same general tenor, but in which he still eluded any answer to the requisition of the Allies, that France should be restored to its limits as in 1792, and held out for the possession of Antwerp, Flanders, and the frontier of the Rhine. He insisted also that the Ionian Islands should be annexed to the kingdom of Italy, and that both should be settled on Prince Eugene and his descendants, with the Adige as a boundary on the side of Austria ; that Saxony should be restored entire ; that the sovereignty of Lucca and Piombino should be secured to his sister the Princess Eliza ; the principality of Neufchatel to Berthier ; and that all the colonies taken during the war, except Saintes, should be restored by Great Britain.¹

This counter-project of Napoleon was met by the following answer on the part of the Allied powers :—"Europe, allied against the French government, wishes only the re-establishment of a general peace, continental and maritime. Such a peace can alone give the world repose, of which it has so long been deprived ; but that peace cannot subsist without a due partition of force among the different powers. No view of ambition has dictated the proposals made on the part of the Allies in the sitting of 17th February last. France, even when restored to her limits of 1792, is still, from the central nature of her situation, her population, the riches of her soil, the strength of her frontiers, the number and distribution of her fortified places, on a level with the greatest powers on the Continent ; the other powers, in consenting to their own reconstruction on a proportional scale, and to the establishment of intermediate independent secondary states, prove at once what are the principles which animate them. England restores to France her colonies, and with them her commerce and her marine. England does more :

CHAP.
LXXXVII.
1814.

March 13.

¹ Contre-pro-
jet of Cau-
laincourt,
March 10 and
13, 1814.
Fain, 335,
359.

112.
Answer of the
Allies to the
ultimatum of
France.

CHAP.
LXXXVII.

1814.

in denuding herself of nearly the whole of the conquests which she has made during so many years, she is far from advancing any pretensions to the exclusive dominion of the seas, or any right inconsistent with the free enjoyment of commerce by others. Inspired with a spirit of justice and liberality worthy of a great people, England throws into the balance of the Continent acquisitions beyond seas, of which the possession would secure her for long the exclusive dominion. In restoring to France her colonies, in making great sacrifices for the restoration of Holland, which the spirit of the Dutch people renders worthy to resume its place in the European family, the British government are entitled to expect that such sacrifices on their part shall purchase a real and effectual, not a merely nominal equilibrium in Europe; that the political state of Europe shall be such as to afford her a guarantee that these concessions have not been a pure loss on her part, that they will not be turned against Europe and herself.

113.
Answer to
the counter-
project of
France.

“The counter-project of the French plenipotentiary proceeds on entirely different principles. According to them, France will retain a territory more extensive than experience has shown to be consistent with the peace of Europe. She will retain those salient points and offensive positions, by the aid of which she has already overturned so many of the adjoining states; the cessions which she proposes to make are only apparent. The principles still announced by the actual sovereign of France, and the dear-bought experience of many years, have proved that adjoining secondary states possessed by members of his family can be independent only in name. Were they to deviate from the principles on which their project of the 17th February rests, the Allied sovereigns would have done nothing for the peace or safety of Europe; the efforts of so many sovereigns leagued together for one end would be lost; the weakness of their cabinets would turn at once against themselves and their subjects; Europe, and France itself, would soon become the victims of new convulsions; Europe would not conclude peace, she would only disarm. The Allied courts, therefore, considering the counter-project of France as essentially at

variance, not merely with the details, but with the spirit of the basis proposed by them, regard any further prolongation of the congress at Chatillon as useless and dangerous : useless, because the proposals of France are opposed to the conditions which the Allies consider necessary to the equilibrium of Europe, and to the reconstruction of the social edifice, to which they are determined to consecrate all the forces with which Providence has entrusted them ; dangerous, because the prolongation of sterile negotiations would only inspire the people of Europe with vain expectations of peace. The Allied powers, therefore, with regret regard the congress of Chatillon as dissolved ; and they cannot separate without declaring that *they make no war upon France*; that they regard the proper dimensions of that empire as one of the first conditions of a proper balance of power ; but that they will not lay down their arms until their principles have been recognised and admitted by its government.”¹

CHAP.
LXXXVII.
1814.

¹ Protocol,
March 18,
1814. Fain,
357, 361.
Koch, ii.
360, 363.

So anxious was Metternich to induce Caulaincourt to make peace on the terms proposed, that on the very morning of the day on which the last meeting of the congress took place, he wrote to him as follows :—“The day when peace may be finally concluded, under the necessary sacrifices, has at length arrived : come to conclude it, but without attempting inadmissible projects. Matters have now come to such a pass, that you can no longer write romances without the greatest risks to the Emperor Napoleon. What risks, on the other hand, do the Allies run ? None but being obliged to evacuate the territory of old France ; and what would that avail the Emperor Napoleon ? The whole left bank of the Rhine will speedily be raised against him : Savoy is in arms : attacks entirely personal will soon be made on the Emperor, without the possibility of arresting them. I speak to you with sincerity ; I am ever on the same path. You know my views, my principles, my wishes. The first are entirely European, and therefore not alien to France ; the second point to retaining Austria interested in the well-being of France ; the third are in favour of a dynasty so intimately united to our own. I speak to you, my dear duke, in the most entire confidence. To put an end to the dangers

114.
Anxiety of
Metternich
for Napoleon
to accede to
these terms.

CHAP.
LXX XVII.

1814.

¹ Metternich
to Caulain-
court, March
18, 1814 ;
and Caulain-
court to Met-
ternich,
March 20,
1814. Fain,
311, 313.

which menace France, it depends only on your master to make peace. Matters, if he does not do so, will ere long be beyond his reach. The throne of Louis XIV. with the additions of Louis XV. is too high a stake to put upon a single throw. I will do my utmost to retain Lord Castlereagh a few days : the moment he is gone, all hope of peace has vanished.”—Caulaincourt replied on the 20th —“ If it depended on me, your hopes would speedily be realised ; I should have no doubt they would, if I was sure that yourself and Lord Castlereagh were the instruments of that work, as glorious as it is desirable.”¹

115.
Reflections
on the disso-
lution of the
Congress.

Thus was finally dissolved the famous congress of Chatillon ; thus departed the last chance which Napoleon had of preserving his revolutionary dynasty on the throne of France. Caulaincourt next day delivered an answer to the note of the Allied sovereigns : it contained nothing but a repetition of the arguments he had formerly urged, but without abating in any degree the pretensions which France had advanced ; and the congress was declared terminated. It broke off from no verbal distinctions or diplomatic casuistry. Real substantial interests were involved in the matters at issue ; it was the life or death of the French supremacy in Europe which was at stake. With Flanders and the Rhenish provinces remaining part of the French empire ; with the kingdom of Italy and the Elector of Saxony for external dependents ; with one hand resting on Antwerp and another on Mantua, and a ready ingress at all times prepared into the heart of Germany through Mayence,—the revolutionary dynasty, impelled alike by internal discontent and external ambition, would never have ceased to disturb the peace of Europe. But of all these great keys to European dominion, it was Antwerp to which the Emperor most strongly held ; it was the dread of losing it which made him, with fifty thousand men, renew a contest with two hundred thousand, almost at the gates of Paris. “ Antwerp,” says Napoleon, “ was to me a province in itself ; it was the principal cause of my exile to St Helena ; for it was the required cession of that fortress which made me refuse the terms offered at Chatillon. If they would have left it to me, peace would have been concluded.”² Strange, that

² Las Cases,
vii. 43, 44,
56, 57.

within twenty years of the time when this great man had preferred risking the crown of France to the surrender of that outwork against England, and in the full knowledge of his opinion as to its importance for their overthrow, the British government, in a paroxysm of political madness, should have lent the aid of their fleet to the French army to wrest that noble fortress from their natural allies the Dutch, and restore it to a revolutionary dynasty and the rule of the tricolor flag!"* 1 *

CHAP.
LXXXVII.

1814.

1 Protocol,
March 19,
1814. Fain,
361, 368.

Napoleon's conduct at this crisis was strikingly characteristic of the indomitable firmness of his mind, and of that mixture of confidence in his powers and unbending rigidity of disposition, which had so long contributed to his elevation. On all sides his empire was crumbling around him. Above a third of France had been wrested from him by the Allies, without firing a shot; Holland and Flanders were lost, Spain had been torn from his arms, Italy was melting from his grasp, and Soult, driven from the Pyrenees, was hardly able to defend the line of the Garonne from the victorious arms of the English and Spaniards. Surrounded by a host of enemies, the most formidable and inveterate which Europe had ever seen, France was reduced to its ancient and narrow limits, when Laon was its frontier, the Garonne its barrier stream, before Philip Augustus and Louis XI. extended its frontiers to the Rhine and the Pyrenees. Napoleon was at the head only of a gallant army of eighty thousand men in the east of France, and fifty thousand in Languedoc, when four hundred thousand effective soldiers were assembled in the heart of France to beat him to the ground. Yet in this desperate situation he abated nothing of his haughty bearing; broke off the congress of Chatillon, rather than surrender Antwerp and Mantua; retained seventy thousand of his best troops in the

116.
Unconquer-
able obstinacy
of Napoleon
at this pe-
riod.

* So intent was Napoleon on the preservation of Antwerp, that on the 17th March, the very day before the ultimatum of the Allies was delivered, declining the proposals of France, Maret, by his orders, wrote from Rheims:—"The abandonment of all their conquests by the English is a real concession which his Majesty approves, especially if it can be combined with leaving us Antwerp. If the negotiation is to be broken off, it is expedient that it should be on the cession of our strongholds, and the evacuation of our territory. If you are obliged to abandon Antwerp, the Emperor requires that you shall insist on the restitution of all our colonies, including the Isle of France, and the adherence to the basis of Frankfurt so far as regards Italy."—MARET to CAULAINCOURT, Rheims, 17th March 1814; FAIN, 307, 308. This letter did not reach Caulaincourt till the congress was dissolved.

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1814.

garrisons of Spain and Germany, to preserve the means of renewing his conquests; and voluntarily risked dethronement, rather than purchase peace by the reduction of his empire to the limits which had satisfied the ambition of Louis XIV. He preferred risking all, in his own words, "to sitting down with a diminished empire, and on a dishonoured throne."

" Qui a regné un moment, aime à regner pour toujours :
Mais si l'essai du trône en fait durer l'envie
Dans l'ame la plus haute à l'égal de la vie,
Un roi né pour la gloire, et digne de son sort,
A la honte des fers sait préférer la mort." *

* CORNEILLE, *Scphonisbe*, Act iii. Scene 6.

CHAPTER LXXXVIII.

FALL OF NAPOLEON.

IN the midst of the general wreck of his empire, it was on Paris, the seat of his power, and the centre of all his political ramifications, that the attention of the Emperor was fixed. The accounts from that capital were sufficiently alarming. Slowly indeed, but perceptibly, and at last in an alarming manner, the vast hosts of the grand army were approaching. The long diversion produced by Blucher's irruption towards Meaux, had in a manner left the road to Paris open to Schwartzenberg. Macdonald and Oudinot, since their defeat at Bar-sur-Aube, were hardly a match for a single corps of the Allied army; Troyes had been reoccupied; the passage of the Seine had been forced at Nogent; their light cavalry again appeared at Fontainebleau and Nemours; and the whole body of their forces might be at Paris on the 20th. The near approach of such formidable masses, the absence of Napoleon, the issue of the battles of Craone and Laon, the fall of Lyons, the occupation of Bordeaux, and proclamation of Louis XVIII. there, had both excited unbounded consternation among the imperial functionaries, and awakened enthusiastic hopes among the royalist party. Their committees were in motion in all the provinces; Paris itself was no stranger to the movements; many of the strongest heads there, regarded the restoration of the Bourbons as the only means of extricating France from the abyss into which it had fallen; many more of the basest hearts looked to it as the securest means of preserving, amidst the ruin of their country, their individual fortunes. Talleyrand, the Abbé de Pradt,

CHAP.
LXXXVIII.

1814.

1.

Alarming
situation of
Paris.

March 12.

March 14.

March 15.

CHAP.
LXXXVIII.

1814.

¹ Fain, 170,
172. Cap. x.
436, 437.
Beauch. ii.
106, 107.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
267, 269.

2.
Napoleon
marches
against
Schwartz-
enberg, and
towards the
Aube.
March 17.

² Fain, 171,
174. Koch,
ii. 57, 59.
Vaud. ii.
208, 211.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
174, 175.
Dan. 260,
261. Plotho,
iii. 314, 315.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
636, 637.

the Duke of Dalberg, M. de Jaucourt, were in secret correspondence with the Allied headquarters; and M. de Vitrolles had communicated to the Emperor Alexander the feeling entertained at Paris on the necessity of a restoration. Alarmed at the dangers which were accumulating on all sides, Prince Joseph urged the Empress to write secretly to her father; but she refused to do so without the knowledge of the Emperor. Consternation or hope was painted in every visage; a restless disquietude kept the people in the streets; and that general quiver in thought was perceptible, which is the invariable precursor of revolution.¹

Amidst so many dangers which pressed on all sides, it was against the army of Schwartzenberg that the Emperor deemed it first expedient to march; for its columns, if not arrested, might be in Paris in three days. To guard against the danger of a surprise by the light troops of Blucher, while he himself was engaged in combating the grand army, he despatched on the 16th secret orders to Joseph, to send off the Empress and King of Rome to the other side of the Loire, in the event of Paris being threatened. Having taken this precaution, he on the day following, left Marmont and Mortier with twenty thousand men, of whom five thousand were cavalry, and sixty pieces of cannon, to make head against Blucher on the Aisne, with instructions to retard his advance as much as possible, and fall back, always drawing nearer to him, towards Paris. Meanwhile, he himself set out with the remainder of his army, about twenty-six thousand strong, (including seven thousand on their road from Paris under Lefebvre Desnouettes,) of which seven thousand were cavalry, to join Macdonald and Oudinot, and drive back the grand army on the banks of the Seine. These marshals had thirty-five thousand under their orders, of whom ten thousand were cavalry; so that to attack Schwartzenberg, who had above a hundred thousand combatants under his command, Napoleon had only sixty thousand men, of whom seventeen thousand were horse.² On the Aisne the disproportion was still greater, for there Blucher, with above a hundred thousand, was opposed only by Marmont and Mortier with twenty thousand—in all, eighty thousand against two hundred

thousand : a fearful disproportion, especially when the long course of previous victories and admirable quality of the Allied troops were considered. Yet was it not so decisive as to relieve the generals from serious anxiety, when the central position of Napoleon was taken into account, the devoted valour of his followers, the force and secrecy of the blows which he dealt out in all directions, the resources which he could command in his own dominions, and their own distance from their reserves, their parks of ammunition, and supplies of provisions.

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The French troops rested the first night at Epervain : the inhabitants emptied their cellars to refresh their defenders ; and for a few hours the delicious wines of Champagne made the soldiers forget their fatigues, the officers their anxieties. On the 18th the march continued towards the Aube, and the army slept at Fere-Champenoise. Napoleon there received intelligence of the state of the negotiations at Chatillon ; and the great probability that on that very day Caulaincourt's counter-project had been rejected, and the congress broken up. Nothing disconcerted by this intelligence, which cut off his last hope of an accommodation, the Emperor held on in his route, hoping to fall on the communications and rear of Schwartzberg's army, which, loosely extended over a vast front nearly eighty miles in breadth, from Fere-Champenoise to Sens, promised to present some of its corps, isolated from the rest, to his strokes. Intelligence of the approach of the French Emperor was soon conveyed to the Allied generals by the admirable horsemen who formed the eyes of their army ; but it was long before they would give any credit to the intelligence, deeming him fully occupied, or closely followed, by Blücher. At length, on the evening of the 18th, the accounts of the approach of large bodies having the ensigns of the Imperial Guard among them, were so alarming that the Emperor Alexander, accompanied by Prince Volkonsky, came up with all imaginable haste from Troyes to Arcis, where Schwartzberg lay confined to bed by the gout. Meeting General Toll, the quartermaster-general, in the antechamber, Alexander said with warmth, "What are you about here ? we may lose the whole army."¹ "It is

3.
And falls un-
aware on
the grand
army.

¹ Dan. 261,
263. Fain,
177, 178.
Vaud. ii.
211, 213.
Koch, ii. 60,
61. Plothe,
iii. 316, 317.
Burgh. 208,
210. Valen-
tini, ii. 179,
184.

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a great blessing," replied Toll, "your Majesty has come ; we could not persuade the generals of that ; but now you will set all to rights." By Alexander's command, orders were instantly despatched in all directions for the army to concentrate between Troyes and Pogny ; Wrede's corps being left in the night to keep possession of Arcis, and the bridge over the Aube, with all his troops.

4.
Napoleon
moves aside,
and Schwartz-
zenberg
resumes the
offensive.

Had Napoleon been at the head of a large force, or even been aware, with the troops he actually had, of the disjointed state of the Allied army, and the panic which prevailed at headquarters, he might possibly, by pursuing his march direct on Arcis, have routed Wrede, and fallen headlong, by the great road to Troyes, into the very centre of the Allied army. In the critical state of the negotiations at Chatillon, and the known timidity of the Austrian councils, the effect of such a success might have been incalculable. Ignorant, however, of the prize almost within his grasp, or deeming himself not strong enough to snatch it, Napoleon, instead of descending the course of the Aube, and moving direct on Arcis, turned aside to his right to Plancy, in order to effect a junction with Macdonald and Oudinot, who had received orders to meet him near that place, having marched that morning from Provins. They met, accordingly, and their united forces crossed the Seine at Mery, traversed the yet smouldering ruins of that town, and at Chatres regained the great road from Troyes to Paris. Napoleon was now at the head of fifty-five thousand men, and prepared, when Lefebvre Desnouettes came up, with seven thousand more, to give battle. But the surprise was over ; his plan of attack was seen ; the Allied corps were rapidly concentrating ; and Schwartzzenberg, ably repairing his former error of undue extension, had stopped the retreat, and given orders to the troops to unite in advance, between Arcis and Plancy, and attack the enemy during his passage of the Aube. By this vigorous and well-timed change of operations, the initiative was taken from Napoleon and given to the Allied generals ; the concentration of their army was effected in advance, instead of retreat ; and they were put in a condition at once to bring the enemy to a general battle, with every advantage on their side arising from a decisive superiority of numbers.¹

¹ Dan. 263,
264. Fain,
176, 177.
Koch, ii. 62,
63. Burgh.
210, 213.
Valentini,
ii. 186, 190.
Ploto, iii.
318, 319.

Napoleon was not prepared for this sudden resumption of the offensive by the Austrian general. He had expected, from the information communicated by Macdonald and Oudinot, to have found the enemy at the gates of Paris; and well knowing the Austrian nervousness about being turned, he had calculated, not without reason, on arresting them by falling on their communications. Now, however, the stroke had failed: the turn to the right at Plancy had given them time to concentrate their army, and all hope of reaching their rear was postponed, if not lost. Persuaded, however, that it was by such a manœuvre only that their enormous masses could be forced back, the Emperor still clung to the idea of turning their right; and therefore he resolved to push forward his left, remount the course of the Aube by Arcis, as far, if necessary, as Bar-sur-Aube: and thus threaten Chaumonte and their communications with the Rhine. On the 20th, accordingly, the whole army marched by the right bank of the Aube, up the stream, till they came opposite to Arcis at ten o'clock.¹

That town was immediately occupied; and Napoleon, coming up at one o'clock in the afternoon, held a council of war with his principal marshals and generals as to the course which should be pursued. The report of the inhabitants was unanimous that the retrograde movement of the Allies had been arrested; that Schwarzenberg, with the greater part of his forces, was within a few miles, screened only by the intervening hills; and that before two hours had elapsed Arcis would be attacked on all sides by their columns. Napoleon, conceiving it impossible that the Austrian generalissimo could have adopted so able and vigorous a resolution, as that of suddenly stopping his retreat, and converging with all his force to the decisive point, persisted in maintaining that they were in full retreat, and that the troops before him were only a rearguard; he summoned up accordingly all his troops, crossed them over the Aube at Arcis, and gave orders to continue the pursuit with the utmost vigour on the road to Troyes.² He was only convinced of his mistake when, on the firing of three guns from a short distance in the rear of the enemy's cavalry, the heads of his columns, converging on all sides towards Arcis, suddenly

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5.

Napoleon
and
Schwarzen-
berg both
march on
Arcis.

March 20.
1 Fain, 160.
Dan. 265.
Burgh. 213.
Plottho, iii.
321. Die
Grosse
Chron. iv.
55, 57.

6.

Napoleon is
still incred-
ulous as to the
Austrian ad-
vance.
March 20.

2 Fain, 180,
181. Dan.
265, 266.
Vand. ii.
215, 217.
Burgh. 213,
214. Plottho,
iii. 321, 323.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
58, 59.
Koch, ii. 65.

CHAP. appeared on the summit of the swelling hills lying on
LXXXVIII. the westward of the town.

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7.
Effect of these
movements
on both sides.

In effect, Schwartzemberg's dispositions had now brought the whole grand army upon Napoleon's forces: and the movement of the latter upon Arcis, instead of directing his forces upon the flanks and rear of a retreating and disjointed host, as he expected, had placed him immediately against the front of a superior and concentrated advancing one. The Prince-Royal of Würtemberg, Raefskoi, and Giulay, had marched at daybreak from Troyes upon Plancy, while Wrede again occupied Arcis, and the guards and reserve came up to Onjon. At ten o'clock, Wrede's advanced guard, agreeably to orders, evacuated that town, and retired towards the south by the road of Troyes; and this retrograde movement it was which made Napoleon conceive that he had only a slender rearguard before him. Meanwhile, Alexander and the King of Prussia arrived on the heights of Ménil-la-Comtesse, where the Russian guards were posted, and the former immediately dismounting, walked backwards and forwards with Barclay de Tolly. "These gentlemen," said the Emperor, looking to the Austrian generals, "have made my head half gray. Napoleon will amuse us here with insignificant movements, and meanwhile march the main body of his forces on Brienne, and fall on our communications." His anxiety the preceding two nights had been excessive, and he had rightly divined the French Emperor's intentions; but the digression of the latter to Plancy had given Schwartzemberg time to concentrate, and a vigorous offensive was about to terminate the long irresolution of the Austrian councils.¹

¹ Dan. 265,
266. Beauch.
ii. 110, 111.
Koch, ii. 67,
68. Burgh.
212, 214.
Jom. iv. 566.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv. 62,
63.

8.
Commence-
ment of the
battle of
Arcis-sur-
Aube.

The battle commenced by a skirmish on the outposts between the cavalry of the Allies under Kaisaroff and that of the French led by Sebastiani. Gradually several batteries of horse artillery were brought up on both sides, fresh squadrons advanced to the support of either party, and in the end a serious cavalry action took place. The French horsemen, though inferior to none in the world in audacity and prowess, were overmatched in number by their opponents, and driven back in great confusion to the bridge of Arcis. Napoleon, who was on the other side, instantly rode forward to the entrance of the bridge,

already all but choked up with fugitives, and, drawing his sword, exclaimed, "Let me see which of you will pass before me." These words arrested the flight: and at the same time the division Friant traversed the streets of Arcis in double quick time, passed the bridge, formed on either side of its other extremity, and by their heavy fire drove back the Allied horse. Meanwhile, a bloody combat had commenced on the French left, between Wrede and Ney; the former endeavouring to storm, the latter to defend the village of Torcy. An Austrian battalion, in the first instance, made itself master of that important post, which would have opened to the Allied right under Wrede the direct road to Arcis; but Ney's men speedily drove them out. Wrede again retook it with three battalions; but Napoleon immediately brought up a body of his Guards, which a second time regained it, and maintained their post until nightfall, despite the utmost efforts of the Bavarians and Austrians.¹

The position of the French was now extremely strong, and well calculated to counterbalance the superiority of numbers which the Allies enjoyed. Their army occupied a semicircular position facing outwards, with each flank resting on the river Aube, so as to be secure against being turned; while in their rear was the town of Arcis, which would form a secure place of defence in case of disaster. The Allies formed a much larger concave semicircle facing inwards—Wrede being on the right, the Russian reserves and guards under Barclay in the centre, Raefskoi, who had now joined, and Giulay on the left. If the whole left had been able to get up in time to take a part in the action around Arcis, the battle would have been as general, and possibly as decisive, as that of Leipsic, to which, as regarded the respective positions of the French and Allies, it bore a very close resemblance. But the corps of the Prince-Royal of Würtemberg was absent on the side of Plancy, opposed to Mortier, where it was engaged only in an inconsiderable skirmish, which terminated in the capture on his part of a few pontoons. Thus nearly a third of the Allied army was absent till the very close of the day. Napoleon took advantage of that circumstance to maintain his position before Arcis till nightfall, and seventy guns, placed in

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¹ Dan. 267,
268. Jom. iv.
567. Fain,
180, 181.
Koch, ii. 68,
69. Burgh.
214. Vol-
derdorff, iv.
8, 204, 205.

9.
Positions of
the parties.

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front of his right, ploughed with fearful effect through the squadrons of the Allies. As soon, however, as the Prince-Royal of Würtemberg approached, Schwartzberg ordered the guards and reserve to advance; the cannon were all hurried to the front, and a general attack commenced. As the Russian batteries of the guard passed the Emperor at full speed, he bade them remember Leipsic; and soon the thunder of their guns was heard above the loudest roar of the combat. The sun was now setting, darkness was stealing over the heavens, Arcois and Torcy were wrapped in flames, the Russian horse artillery on the Allied left reduced the French cannon to silence, and their long array of guns, advancing to the front of the semicircle of heights which surround the town, played with terrible effect on the dense columns of the French which encircled its walls. The Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia now descended from the heights of Méné-la-Comtesse, and followed the reserves into action; behind them came a brigade of the Prussian, and the red Cossacks of the Russian guards, making the air resound with their trumpets and the war-songs of the desert.¹

¹ Fain, 181, Dan. 269. Beauch. ii. 121. Plotho, iii. 327, 328. Die Grosse Chron. iii. 69, 70.

10.
Imminent danger of Napoleon and firmness of the French.

On the side of the French the scene was as mournful as on the Allied it was animating. Motionless, but undaunted, the troops stood under the terrible cannonade; with the instinct of discipline the ranks closed up as fast as chasms were made: the officers exposed themselves like the privates, the generals as the officers. Napoleon was repeatedly in imminent danger, both from the charges of cavalry and fire of artillery; many of his staff were killed or wounded: a bomb fell at his side, he calmly waited its explosion, which covered him with smoke and dust, and wounded his horse; he mounted another and maintained his position. "Fear nothing," said he to the generals, who urged him to retire; "the bullet is not yet cast which is to kill me." He seemed to court rather than to shrink from death; his air was resolute, but sombre; and as long as the battle raged, by the light of the burning houses behind, and the flash of the enemy's guns in front, he continued with undaunted resolution to face the hostile batteries.² This dreadful cannonade continued till ten at night, when it died away from mutual exhaustion, and a nocturnal irruption by Sebas-

² Dan. 269, 270. Fain, 181, 182. Beauch. ii. 121, 124. Vand. ii. 221, 223. Koch, ii. 69. 72. Plotho, iii. 327, 329. Die Grosse Chron. iv. 73, 74.

tiani on Kaisaroff, which was repulsed, terminated the day.

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Both parties slept on the field of battle, and neither could claim any decided advantage; for if, on the one hand, the French had been stopped in their advance, and thrown back on the defensive around the walls of Arcis; on the other, the Allies, though decidedly superior in number, had not been able to force their position there, or drive them over the Aube. On the side of the Allies, great efforts were made to bring up all their remote detachments, and concentrate their army; and a general and decisive battle, on the succeeding day, was universally anticipated. At daybreak, the whole army was in line, and stood in the following order:—Count Wrede was at Chaudre, in front of the blood-stained ruins of Torey; the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg at the hamlet of Ménil, Giulay on his left, and then Raczfskoi with his Russians. The grenadiers and cuirassiers were in the second line, behind the centre, at Ménil-la-Comtesse. On the side of Napoleon, the troops stood on the same ground, in a semicircle around Arcis, which they had occupied on the preceding day, without any addition; for though Macdonald and Oudinot had come up during the night, yet their forces, now raised to nearly thirty thousand strong, were still stationed on the opposite side of the river.¹

11.
Order of
battle for the
following day.

¹ Dan. 270,
271. Fain,
181, 182.
Vaud. ii. 223,
224. Plotho,
iii. 330, 332.
Valentini, ii.
187

It was an awful and yet animating sight when the rising sun glittered on the low swelling hills which surrounded the town of Arcis. A hundred and fifty thousand men on the two sides, trained to the most perfect discipline, but animated by burning passions, were drawn up, gazing at each other, at a very short distance, without moving from the spot on which they were placed. The soldiers stood at ease, but with their muskets at their shoulders: the cavalry were for the most part dismounted, but every bridle was over the horseman's arm; the slow matches were burning at the guns in front of the lines; a word from either commander would at once have let slip the dogs of war, and roused a dreadful combat. Yet not a sound was to be heard, scarcely a movement seen, in either army. Motionless, yet ever in perfect array, the vast masses stood front-

12.
The French
at length
retreat.

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ing each other ; not a gun was fired, not a voice was raised ; it seemed as if both hosts, impressed with the solemnity of the moment which was to decide the conflict of twenty years, were too deeply affected to disturb the stillness of the scene. But hour after hour passed away without any movement being attempted on either side, until the long suspense had made the very eyes of the soldiers to ache, and their hearts to sink within them at danger long fronted, hope long deferred.* At one time, a large part of Macdonald's corps was brought across, and there seemed every appearance of the action commencing : but that was only a feint : a second bridge had meanwhile been thrown over the Aube ; and at one in the afternoon the equipages were seen defiling to the rear, and decided symptoms of a retreat were manifested. No movement could be conceived more hazardous in presence of nearly a hundred thousand men, ready to fall on and crush the rearguard after half the army had passed. Such was the respect, however, inspired by the very name of Napoleon, and the imposing array which his forces made around Arcis, that it was not till three o'clock that Schwartzberg gave the signal for attack.¹

¹ Dan. 272,
273. Fain,
181, 183.
Koch, ii. 75,
77. Vaud. ii.
229, 230.
Burgh. 216,
217. Plottho,
iii. 331.
Valentini, ii.
187.

13.
The French
rearguard is
attacked.

The troops on all sides immediately advanced, preceded by a hundred pieces of cannon, which opened their fire at the same instant. Pahlen attacked on the right, Raefskoi in the centre ; and soon the advancing batteries approached so near, that their balls crossed each other in all directions over the town ; bombs fell in all the streets and on both the bridges, and many houses took fire. If the Austrian general had advanced two hours earlier to the attack, it must have been a repetition of the triumph which, in a similar situation at Friedland,† Napoleon had gained over an army of Russians of much the same strength as that he now commanded.‡ But the attack had been deferred too late for decisive success : a large part of the

* The great road from Arcis-sur-Aube to Chaumonte passes through the centre of the Allied position, in the winding sweep which it makes to surmount the heights that bound the valley of the Aube to the south-west of the town. Of the innumerable travellers who pass over the field, how few think of the memorable scene decisive of the fate of Napoleon, and the revolution of which it was the theatre !—*Personal Observation.*

† *Ante*, Chap. xlv. § 56.

‡ The relative strength of the French and Russians at Friedland was almost exactly the same as that of the Allies and French at Arcis ; the French had eighty thousand, and the Russians fifty thousand.

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French army had passed over before the combat became serious; and the rearguard under Macdonald maintained so gallant a resistance, that it was dark before the Allied troops approached Arcis. Prince Eugene of Würtemberg's men at length drove back Oudinot, and broke into the town close after the French rearguard, which rushed towards the bridges; their cavalry crossed at a ford; the bridge was blown up; a desperate conflict took place in the streets; and numbers were drowned in trying to swim across after the arch was cut away. During the whole night, however, the French kept up so heavy a cannonade from the opposite bank, that all attempts to restore it proved ineffectual; and before morning dawned, Napoleon was far advanced on the road to Vitry, leaving only a powerful rearguard in front of Arcis to retard the passage of the river.^{1*}

¹ Fain, 182, 183. Dan. 273, 274. Koch, ii. 76, 81. Burgh. 217. Vaud. ii. 229, 233. Ploto, iii. 329, 334. Die Grosse Chron. iv. 82, 84.

Though the battle of Arcis-sur-Aube was not attended with any brilliant trophies taken in the field, yet it was followed by decisive effects on the fortunes of Napoleon. The loss of the French was about four thousand men, of whom eight hundred were prisoners, and six pieces of cannon; that of the Allies was as great. But its immediate result was to throw Napoleon upon the eccentric line of operations which immediately led to his fall. His meditated project of falling upon the rear and communications of the grand army had wholly failed: his cross march to Plancy had given them time to concentrate, and he had been repulsed in the attempt to penetrate by main force into the Allied lines. It had been completely proved that his strength was unequal to hurtling against their immense masses when drawn together. Nothing remained but still to threaten their communications; to draw near to the garrisons of the frontier, from which those supplies of veteran troops could be obtained which were no longer to be found in the heart of France, and to further the efforts of the insurgent bodies of peasantry who, inflamed by a patriotic spirit, and irritated by the pillage of the Allied troops, were waiting only the signal of his advance to commence a murderous guerilla warfare on

14.
Napoleon's reasons for the march to St Dizier.

* On leaving Arcis, Napoleon sent two thousand francs from his private purse to the *Sœurs de la Charité*, by the Count de Turenne, to assuage the sufferings of the wounded.—FAIN, 182, note.

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¹ Fain, 184,
185. Dan.
275. Jom.
iv. 570, 571.
Koch, ii. 81,
84. Vaud. ii.
234, 240.
Claus. vii.
443. Plotho,
iii. 335, 336.

15

Napoleon's
march to St
Dizier.
March 22.

March 23.
² Jom. iv.
573. Koch,
ii. 84, 87.
Fain, 185,
186. Die
Grosse
Chron. iv.
97. Plotho,
iii. 333.

their flanks and rear. To do this, however, required an immense sacrifice—it was necessary to march direct towards the Rhine, and abandon the defence of Paris; for the Emperor's army was so sorely reduced in numbers, that to divide was to destroy it. Moreover, the success of the measure depended entirely on the formation, by the aid of the disengaged garrisons, of such an imposing force on the enemy's communications as would command attention, and entirely withdraw them from any movement on the capital. Impressed with these ideas, on which he had long meditated, and which, situated as he was, were unquestionably well founded, Napoleon, on leaving Arcis, instead of taking the road either to Chalons, from whence he had come, or to Paris, by which it was expected he would retire, moved on the *chaussée* of Vitry direct towards the Rhine.^{1*}

The Emperor's first day's march was to the environs of Vitry. Ney was sent up to the walls of the town to summon it to surrender, threatening at the same time to put the whole garrison, in the event of resistance, to the sword. After some hesitation, however, the governor, who was at the head of a garrison of five thousand men, and forty pieces of cannon, resolved to stand the hazard of an assault, and manfully held out. This check, which Napoleon had not anticipated, disarranged his plans; for he was in no condition either to batter its walls or attempt an escalade. Turning aside, therefore, from this unprofitable attempt, he next day continued his march, and reached St Dizier, where headquarters were established for the night. He was there joined by Caulaincourt, with intelligence of the dissolution of the congress of Chatillon. This portentous event, combined with the hopelessness of the war, and seeming extravagance of the march towards the Rhine, completed the discouragement of the generals and officers.²

They saw no end to the campaign, no fruit for their toils or their blood. Instead of defending Paris, they

* “I marched on St Dizier,” said Napoleon afterwards at Elba, to General Kohler, the Austrian commissioner, “because twenty experiments had convinced me that I had only to send a few hussars on your line of communication, in order to spread dismay amongst you. On this occasion I stood on it with my whole army, but you never troubled your heads about me: ’twas because the devil had possession of you.”—DANILEFSKY, 279.

were marching towards Germany: the capital of their country, their homes, their hearths, would become the prey of the enemy; while all that was dear to them was lost, they were plunging anew into an endless warfare, to which they could see neither an issue nor an object. A revolution was openly spoken of, even at headquarters, as a possible, perhaps a probable contingency; the obstinacy which had refused the terms offered by the Allies was universally condemned; many doubted the Emperor's sanity of mind. "Where is this to end? Whither are we marching? If he falls, shall we fall with him?" was universally asked. Disregarding these murmurs and discontents, with the existence of which he was only partially acquainted, Napoleon spread out his wings on either side from St Dizier to Bar-sur-Aube, headquarters being established at Doulevant; and the light cavalry having got on the great road to Langres, in the rear of the Allies, and on their principal line of communication, entered Chaumonte, captured a pontoon train and a considerable quantity of baggage and ammunition, and spread terror from Troyes to Vesoul.¹

Great was the astonishment in the Allied army when they beheld the French columns retreating, not towards the capital but the Rhine. A Cossack who first brought in the intelligence, was so confounded, that he said, "The enemy is retreating, not on Paris, *but on Moscow*." It soon, however, became evident that the French line of march was decidedly taken, and Schwartzemberg, suspecting it was a feint, and desirous at all events to be near the enemy and keep his own troops together, crossed the greater part of his army over at Arcis, and the adjacent fords, leaving Giulay alone, with the rearguard, to retain possession of the bridge. On the day following his troops continued to pursue the enemy's rearguard; and some squadrons of cavalry having succeeded in routing a detachment of French horse at Sommeperis, which guarded a park of guns, the pieces, in number three-and-twenty, were taken, and four hundred prisoners. But what was of far more importance, despatches from Napoleon's headquarters were intercepted, which left no doubt of his design of moving on St Dizier, and falling on the communications of the grand army. On these letters

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16.
Extreme discouragement
of the army.

March 24.

March 25.

¹ Fain, 185,

187. Vaud.

ii. 247, 249.

Jom. iv. 573.

Koch, ii. 84,

90. Plotho,

iii. 341, 342.

17.

The Allies
follow the
enemy, and
gain intelligence of his
designs.

March 22.

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¹ Dan. 275,
278. Burgh.
220, 221.
Plotto, iii.
329, 342.
Die Grosse
Chron. iii.
109, 110.

18.
Important
council of
war at the
Allied head-
quarters.

being taken, they were straightway forwarded to Prince Schwartzemberg, who deemed them of such importance, that he immediately had them forwarded to the Emperor Alexander at Pogny. They proved to be a secret despatch from Savary, giving the most deplorable account, both of the total exhaustion of resources and the shaken state of the public mind at Paris, and a private letter from Napoleon to Marie Louise, announcing his intended movement on St Dizier, and design to draw near to the strong places on the frontier.¹ *

These important letters reached Alexander at Dampierre at one o'clock in the morning. They had hardly been read over, when despatches arrived from Count Pahlen, with intelligence of his having, on the road from Arcis to Chalons, fallen in with Chernicheff at the head of Blucher's advanced guard; and that the army of Silesia had advanced from Laon to Rheims and Epernay, and occupied Chalons. Thus at the very moment that Napoleon had withdrawn from the protection of Paris, and marched towards the Rhine, the heads of Schwartzemberg's and Blucher's armies had effected a junction in his rear, and a hundred and eighty thousand men stood between him and the capital! Accounts at the same time arrived of the occupation of Bordeaux by the British troops, and the proclamation of Louis XVIII., with the general concurrence of the inhabitants. This extraordinary combination of important events led the Emperor Alexander, who had come on to Sommepevis, musing on them by the

* Napoleon's letter to the Empress Marie Louise was in these terms:—"My love! I have been for some days constantly on horseback; on the 20th I took Arcis-sur-Aube. The enemy attacked me there at eight o'clock in the evening; I beat him the same evening; I took two guns, and retook two. The next day the enemy's army put itself in battle array to protect the march of its columns on Brienne and Bar-sur-Aube; and I resolved to approach the Marne, and its environs, in order to drive them further from Paris, by approaching my own fortified places. This evening I shall be at St Dizier. Farewell, my love! Embrace my son!"—See BURGHESH'S *Operations of the Allied Army in France*, 339, No. 14; and DANILEFSKY, 285. It is remarkable that the important despatches which announced to Hannibal the arrival of Hasdrubal in Italy, and led to the march of the consul Nero, and decisive victory of the Metaurus, were in like manner intercepted by the Roman light horse. "Hasdrubal's horsemen," says Arnold, "fell in with some foragers of the army of Quintus Claudius, and were made prisoners. The Prætor instantly sent them under a strong escort to Nero. They were the bearers of a letter from Hasdrubal to his brother, containing the whole plan of their future operations. It was written not in cipher, but in the common Carthaginian language and character; and the interpreter read its contents in Latin to the consul. Nero took his resolution on the instant."—LIVY, xxvii. 43; ARNOLD, iii. 367.

way, to call in Prince Volkonsky, Count Barclay, and Generals Diebitch and Toll, who all took part in the memorable council which followed. Alexander, adhering to the opinion which he had all along maintained, that the real object of the war was to destroy the military power of Napoleon, at first stated that he thought the most advisable course would be to unite with Blucher at Vitry, pursue the French Emperor, and attack him wherever they should find him. "We have to choose, however, between that," he added, "and, concealing our movements from him, to march straight to Paris. What is your opinion, gentlemen?" turning to Barclay de Tolly. "We had better," said the field-marshal, after looking at the map, "follow Napoleon and attack him." All agreed in this opinion, coming as it did from the first in rank and the first in reputation, except Diebitch and Volkonsky. The former said that it would be more advisable, in his opinion, while the united armies were following Napoleon, for Bulow, who was lying at Soissons, to make a dash at Paris. To this Volkonsky replied in these memorable words:¹—

"It is well known that there are at Paris forty thousand National Guards and fragments of regiments; and, in addition to these, at a short distance from the capital, are the two corps of Marmont and Mortier. Their united force will be at least seventy thousand strong; consequently we cannot expect that Bulow, with his thirty thousand, could effect any thing of importance; on the contrary, he would expose himself to danger by attacking an enemy so greatly superior to him in numbers. On the other hand, if we follow Napoleon, we must leave a considerable rearguard to ward off the attack of these two marshals. In these circumstances, I am of opinion that it would be advisable first to unite with the Silesian army, and then to detach against Napoleon a numerous body of cavalry and some regiments of infantry, with instructions every where to prepare accommodation for the Emperor, that it may be believed we are following with the whole army. We ought then to march straight to Paris through Fere-Champenoise, and Blucher through Etoges, keeping up an uninterrupted communication between the two armies. Following this route, we must attack Marshals

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¹ Dan. 286,
287. Jom. iv.
577. Burgh.
224.

19.
Volkonsky's
advice to
march to
Paris, which
is adopted by
Alexander.

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Marmont and Mortier wherever we meet them. But we shall beat them, because we are stronger than they; and each day will place two marches between us and Napoleon." Alexander warmly approved this advice, which coincided entirely with the spirit of the vigorous councils he had always supported. "If it is your majesty's intention," said Diebitch, "to re-establish the Bourbons, it would certainly be better to march with both armies to Paris." "We are not now talking of the Bourbons," replied Alexander, "but of pulling down Napoleon." It was then calculated how long it would take to reach Paris; and it was found it would be possible to assemble both armies, take possession of the capital, and destroy Napoleon's power there, before he could get back to its relief, if he should attempt to regain it. The plan was then unanimously agreed to by all present; but the Emperor, before finally adopting it, expressed a wish to communicate it to the King of Prussia and Prince Schwartzemberg, and for that purpose mounted his horse and rode off towards Vitry, accompanied by General Toll.¹

¹ Dan. 287,
289. Die
Grosse
Chron. iv.
127, 128.

20.
It is adopted
by Schwartz-
emberg and
the King of
Prussia.

It was on the high road from Sommevis to Vitry, five miles from the former place, that the Emperor met the King of Prussia and Prince Schwartzemberg, who were on their way to him. They all immediately dismounted, and ascending a knoll on the roadside, from whence Vitry and the whole adjacent plain were in view, the Emperor desired General Toll to unroll the map on the grass, and, leaning over it, explained Volkonsky's views, which he had now adopted as his own. The King and the Prince at once assented to the plan; the former observing that it entirely coincided with his own wishes: the latter, that he would indeed in this way lose his magazines at Chaumonte, and would suffer for some time from the interruption of his communications; but that this evil, such as it was, had been already incurred, and that the proposed change of operations should meet with his cordial support. This was at eleven o'clock in the morning on the 24th of March, on a height within sight of Vitry, whither the troops were seen marching on all sides, over fields just beginning to put forth the first colours of restored nature. The sun shone with unclouded brilliancy; a balmy freshness, succeeding to the long and

dreary frost which had preceded it, softened the air; all nature seemed to be reviving under the breath of spring. Alexander, pointing in the direction of the capital, said aloud, "Let us all march to PARIS."* These words were the DEATH-WARRANT OF THE REVOLUTION, twenty-five years after it had first begun by the convocation of the States-General, in March 1789; and exactly that day one year and nine months since, on the 24th June 1812, Napoleon, at the head of five hundred thousand men, had beheld, in the pride of apparently irresistible strength, his superb army cross the Niemen to invade the Russian territories. The intercepting of a letter, and the omission to write it in cipher, were the immediate cause of the ruin of Napoleon, as they had been of Hannibal, and determined the contest between France and England, as they had done that between Rome and Carthage.¹

Although the resolution to march on Paris was thus formally adopted, it required some time before the necessary orders could be prepared, and a change of direction communicated to a hundred and eighty thousand men, who, over an extent of above seventy miles in breadth, overspread the plains of Champagne. Alexander and Schwartzemberg, with the King of Prussia, rode on to Vitry, where headquarters were established for the remainder of the day, and couriers were sent off in all directions with the requisite instructions to the commanders of corps. Shortly after the Emperor had taken up his quarters at Vitry, Chernicheff arrived with Blucher's advanced guard, and being immediately admitted to the Emperor, earnestly enforced the propriety of an immediate advance to Paris. "Ask Volkonsky," replied Alexander, smiling, "what resolution we came to only half an hour ago." Meanwhile the whole corps of the grand army were grouped around Vitry, with the exception of Giulay, who still remained in guard of the bridge of Arcis. The following orders were then issued. At daybreak on the next morning, the grand army was to march direct by the high road through Fere-Champenoise to Meaux;² while the Silesian army was to advance to the same place

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¹ Dan. 288,
289. Burgh.
222, 225.
Ploto, iii.
344. Claus.
vii. 448.

21.
Orders given
for the march
of the troops
to Paris.

² Ploto, iii.
346, 348.
Burgh. 224,
225. Dan.
291, 292.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
111, 113.

* The spot where these words were spoken, may be seen on a little knoll on the right of the road from Sommepevis to Vitry.—*Personal Observation.*

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from Chalons. The united armies were to advance direct from Meaux upon the capital, which it was expected they would reach by the 29th.

22.
Winzingerode is detached after Napoleon.

Meanwhile, a column of eight thousand horse, with forty-six pieces of horse artillery, under Winzingerode, were sent in the direction of St Dizier after Napoleon. His instructions were to detach Chernicheff with a large body of Cossacks to the right, towards Montierender, to observe the country between the Marne and the Aube; and Tettenborn to the left towards Metz, to observe whether Napoleon was making any movement in the direction of that fortress. His grand object was to be to conceal the movements of the Allies from the French, and to give his own headquarters accurate information of the direction of Napoleon. The better to conceal what was going forward, Winzingerode received instructions every where to give orders for the reception of the Emperor of Russia. Flying detachments were at the same time sent out; Kaisaroff and Sislavin to scour the country, the former to the southward, in the direction of Brienne and Montierender, the latter of Montmirail and Montereau, in order, if possible, to prevent any communication passing between Paris and the French Emperor. All the troops were directed to march in fighting order, all the battalions being in columns of attack. At three in the afternoon, Winzingerode, with his numerous corps of cavalry, marched out of Vitry towards St Dizier; all became quiet in the former town, where the Emperor Alexander's headquarters alone remained, and soon the sky was illuminated by the blaze of innumerable bivouacs along the banks of the Marne, where the rude warriors of the east reposed around their humble watch-fires.¹

¹ Dan. 291.
293. Burgh.
224, 225.
Plotho, iii.
374. Die
Grosse
Chron. iv.
130, 133.

23.
Enthusiasm of the troops on advancing to Paris.

No words can convey an idea of the enthusiasm which prevailed throughout the whole Allied army, when, at daybreak on the 25th, it became evident, from the routes assigned to the different corps, that a general march on Paris had been resolved on. The joyful news spread from rank to rank; the transports of the soldiers rose to the highest pitch. By a natural transition, their minds reverted to the days of their own humiliation; to the disastrous day when, at the close of their long-continued retreat, they had, with bursting hearts, abandoned their capital to

the invader. The staff-officers who now wrote the march routes for the troops, were the same as those who, in 1812, when Moscow was relinquished, had framed the instructions for the army when it marched out by the Riazan road. The same hands which had then written Bogorodsk, Kassimoff, Serpukoff, and Podolsk, now put down Etoges, Epernay, Fere-Champenoise, and Vertus. An age seemed to have separated the two periods, yet were they only distant eighteen months! The Russian veterans, with the medal of 1812 on their bosoms, reverted to the dreadful war of that year; they remembered the ghastly horrors of the field of Borodino, the circular night march round Moscow by the light of its flames; and mingled with the exultation, shared with them by their younger comrades, a deeper spirit of thankfulness for the marvellous protection afforded by Providence to their country.¹

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LXXXVII.
1814.

¹ Dan. 293.

Although serious disasters might have been expected from the irruption of Napoleon with his whole force on the communications of the grand army, yet the mischief done was by no means considerable. Such was the activity displayed by General Ertel, the head of the military police, in the rear, that on the approach of the French he collected the wounded, regimental waggons, parks, and waggons of treasure, and retired to Chaumonte, where the Emperor's baggage joined him. He then retreated towards Langres and Vesoul, with such regularity and expedition that, with the exception of a pontoon train, some couriers, and twenty carts, hardly any thing was taken. At the same time, out of the least hurt among the wounded he formed a corps at Altkirch, of six thousand men, which, daily augmented by the reinforcements coming up through Germany, soon became so considerable as not only to secure the depots from insult, but sufficient to repress every attempt at insurrection in the adjacent country. Nay, by the able dispositions of General Koller, the adjutant-general of the Austrian army, the capture of the magazines at Chaumonte was prevented. Meanwhile Winzingerode encountered Napoleon's rearguard at Thieblemont, which confirmed the Emperor in the belief that the grand army was pursuing him.² Conceiving now that all danger to Paris was averted, he

24.
Judicious
measures of
Ertel in the
rear of the
grand army.

² Dan. 293,
294. Burgll.
222.

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25.
Movements
of Marmont
and Mortier.

March 18.

March 19.

March 20.
¹ Burgh. 227,
228. Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
187, 188.
Koch, ii. 95,
105. Die
Grosse
Chron. iv
113. 115.

sent orders to Marmont and Mortier, who were retiring towards the capital before the army of Silesia, to march through Vitry and join him there.

These two marshals had occupied the position assigned to them at Soissons and Rheims, till the 18th March; when Blucher, having at length obtained from the Low Countries in his rear those supplies of provisions from the want of which, ever since the battle of Laon, he had so grievously suffered,* and having received intelligence of the departure of Napoleon to operate against Schwartzberg on the Aube, made a forward movement, and crossed the Aisne, after some resistance, at Bery-au-Bac and the ford of Asfeld. Having thus accomplished the passage of that important river, the Prussian marshal detached his left wing, under Winzingerode, against Mortier at Rheims, who, in no condition to contend with so formidable a force, evacuated it at his approach. Marmont, however, having joined him before he had got far from the town, it was resolved to reoccupy a post of such importance before it was taken possession of in strength by the enemy, and endeavour to make it good. It was held accordingly that day, and Winzingerode was making preparations for an escalade when, in the night, Mortier again evacuated it, and the two marshals, retiring together, took a position, intending to accept battle, at Fismes. Blucher, however, desirous of re-establishing his communications with the grand army, and of operating to the relief of Schwartzberg, rather than the threatening of Paris, instead of advancing in pursuit of the two marshals, extended himself from Rheims towards Epernay and Vitry; while Marmont and Mortier, abandoning Soissons to its own resources, with a garrison of three thousand men, resolved to keep the field as long as possible in front of Compiègne.¹

On the 21st, however, they received Napoleon's orders to join him in the environs of Vitry. Regretting then that they had so easily abandoned Rheims, they had no alternative but to make the prescribed march by cross roads to regain Chateau-Thierry, and endeavour to thread

* "I am struggling with the greatest want of provisions; the soldiers have been for some days without bread; and I am cut off from Nancy, so that I have no means of procuring it."—BLUCHER to SCHWARTZENBERG, 17th March 1814; DANILEFSKY, 258.

their devious way through the Allied columns, to join the Emperor on the banks of the Marne. They set out accordingly; but meanwhile, General Vincent, who lay at Eprenay with seven hundred men, was attacked by Tettenborn with two regiments of Cossacks, and, after a stout resistance, driven out of the town with the loss of half his forces. Deeming, from this check, the great chaussée by Eprenay strongly occupied, the marshals resolved to seek their way through by the other road which passes by Etoges and Fere-Champenoise, little dreaming that in so doing they would fall at once into the jaws of the grand army, which was advancing by that very road to the capital. Meanwhile Blucher, despairing of being able, on his side, to prevent the junction of the two marshals with the Emperor, took the resolution of marching across from Rheims, by Chalons to Vitry, to join the grand army. Thus, by a singular combination of circumstances, the whole hostile armies were, by the separate resolutions of their chiefs, unknown to each other, concentrating into two masses in close proximity, and mutually crossing to effect that object; the Allies uniting from Vitry to Chalons, and marching towards Paris; the other striving for a point of rendezvous at Vitry, to carry the war towards the Rhine. But the latter required, to effect that object, to pierce with part of their force through the heart of the enemy's army.¹

The march of the two marshals met at first with no interruption; on the 22d they reached Montmirail, on the 23d Etoges, and on the 24th Vitry and Soude, where they rested for the night. Intelligence of the occupation of Chalons by the enemy, and of their converging towards Paris, here reached them; and Count Bordesoult, with Marmont's advanced guard, even reported that at Coste he had fallen in with the videttes of the Bavarians belonging to Wrede's corps. The marshals gave no credit, however, to the information, being fully persuaded that the grand army was following on the traces of Napoleon; and they were not even wakened from their delusion by the vast illumination of the sky to the eastward, produced by the countless bivouacs of the now united Allied host, which was not eight miles distant. At day-break on the 25th, both armies were in motion—the

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26.

They cross
the country
to join Na-
poleon.
March 21.

¹ Koch, ii.
95, 112.
Vaud. ii. 270,
278. Burgh.
227, 228.
Vict. et Conq.
xxiii. 187,
189. Die
Grosse
Chron. iv.
115, 117.
Plotho, iii.
375.

27.

Approach of
both armies
to Fere-
Champenoise.
March 24.

CHAP.
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1814.

¹ Dan. 307,
309. Burgh.
228, 229.
Vict. et Conq.
xxiii. 270,
271. Vaud.
ii. 277, 279.
Plotho, iii.
380, 381.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
134, 137.

28.
Battle of
Fere-Cham-
penoise.

Allies marching towards Paris, the French from Paris towards Vitry—both on the same road. The common rendezvous of Blucher's and Schwartzenberg's troops was Fere-Champenoise. The two advanced guards came in sight of each other, near Soude-St-Croix, at eight o'clock in the morning. Marmont's videttes hastily retired on seeing the masses which were approaching; and the marshal himself, now seriously alarmed, drew back to Sommesous, where he took up a position, and sent an urgent request to Mortier to come to his support. The latter marshal had encountered the cavalry of Doctoroff, forming the advanced guard of Blucher, at Dommartin-Lettrée; and finding every avenue by which he could proceed blocked up by the enemy, he hastened to obey the summons, and by a cross march joined Marmont near Lenharée. Both corps then retreated, combating vigorously all the way. But the rapidly increasing numbers of the enemy, and the repeated charges of the Russian horse, threw them into a certain degree of confusion, and several guns had been lost before they reached Conantray, painfully toiling to gain the heights of FERE-CHAMPENOISE.¹

The force of the two marshals was twenty-two thousand men, of whom nearly five thousand were horse, with eighty-four guns. Of the Allied troops none but cavalry and artillery had yet got up; but they were very numerous, and embraced the flower of the Russian and Austrian army. Twenty thousand horse, including the cuirassiers and chevaliers of the guards, with a hundred and twenty-eight guns, thundered in close pursuit; and though the French cavalry gallantly struggled against the overwhelming odds by which they were assailed, and their infantry formed square and retreated at first with great regularity, yet, from the long continuance of the fight, and the necessity of constantly retiring when surrounded by the enemy's squadrons, they at last fell into confusion. Several squares were broken by the Russian chevalier guards and cuirassiers; the gallant French horse, who had just arrived from Spain, strove to disengage their comrades on foot, but they too were overthrown by a charge of the Russian and Austrian cuirassiers, headed by the Grand-duke Constantine and General Nostitz, who

took twenty-four guns; Pahlen's horse, under Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, captured twenty more: while another large body of cavalry appeared suddenly on their extreme left, and threatened to cut off their retreat. At the same time a violent storm of wind and rain arose, which, blowing right in the face of the French infantry, as it had done in that of the Austrians at Dresden,* prevented great part of the muskets from going off. A sudden panic now seized the French army: horse, foot, and artillery, breaking their ranks, rushed in a tumultuous torrent towards Fere-Champenoise; vast numbers of guns and caissons were taken; and it was only the gallant countenance of a regiment of heavy cavalry, under the brave Le Clerc, who opportunely came up at the moment, and charging out of the town right through the fugitives, stopped the horse under Nostitz, that gave the two marshals time to re-form their troops on the other side of its buildings, and with the approach of night saved them from total ruin.¹

While these glorious and important successes were gained by the advanced guard, the Emperor Alexander and the King of Prussia had left Vitry with Schwartzberg at nine in the morning, following the same great road by Soude-St-Croix, Sommesous, and Conantray. They heard the distant firing as they approached Fere-Champenoise; and, hurrying forward to the front, at length reached that town just as the sun was about to set. Instead of halting there, the Emperor, accompanied by Schwartzberg and a slender suite, set out for the advanced posts, whence a dropping and receding fire was still to be heard. They had not proceeded far when they descried on the right a considerable body of troops, having in convoy a large train of artillery, who were moving for Fere-Champenoise. From the direction they were taking, and the circumstance of their advancing without hesitation towards that town when in the hands of the Allies, they were first thought to be part of Blucher's army. But they soon proved to be French, and were in effect General Pacthod's division, protecting a great convoy of guns and bread, which had been driven into this apparently unaccountable cross march, to avoid Blucher's advanced guard,

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¹ Dan. 307,
309. Koch,
iii. Burgh.
229, 231.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
271, 272.
Vaud. ii.
276, 281.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
140, 142.

29.
Second combat at Fere-Champenoise.

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxx. § 31.

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¹ Vaud. ii.
282, 284.
Vict. et
Conq. xxlii.
273, 274.
Lond. 287,
288. Dan.
313. Koch.
iii. 388, 392.
Ploto, iii.
378, 380.

30.
Heroic resis-
tance of the
French.

² Dan. 314,
315, Lond.
287, 290.
Vaud. ii.
283, 285.
Ploto, iii.
375, 377.
Burgh. 230,
231. Die
Grosse
Chron. iv.
144, 146.

with which, to their infinite astonishment, they had fallen in near Bierges, on the road to Vitry. Immediately forming his troops in square, with the convoy in the centre, Pacthod had long and bravely resisted the impetuous charges of Generals Korff and Wassilchikoff, at the head of the best Russian horse of the army of Silesia. At length, perceiving the enemy's squadrons and artillery every moment thickening around him, he abandoned the convoy, harnessing its horses to the guns so as to double their complement, and was making his way by a flank movement across the fields to Fere-Champenoise, when he fell into the middle of the cavalry of the Russian and Prussian guards.¹

As soon as Alexander was aware that this corps consisted of enemies, he took the most prompt measures to encompass them and accomplish their destruction. The Russian and Prussian cuirassiers of the guard were formed on their right; Korff's hussars, who had moved parallel to them in their cross march, in front; and Wassilchikoff's dragoons on their left and rear. Thus nine thousand chosen horse, supported by seventy guns, were ready to assail six thousand infantry, without cavalry, and with only sixteen pieces of cannon. Having in this manner environed the enemy, Alexander, to prevent a useless effusion of blood, summoned the French general to surrender. Pacthod, albeit sensible that escape was hopeless, nobly refused, and briefly haranguing his soldiers, exhorted them to die like brave men in defence of their country. Loud cheers followed the generous appeal, and immediately the firing began. Formed into squares, with the ammunition and carriages in the centre, they bravely began a rolling fire, still continuing to retreat towards Fere-Champenoise, and for some time repelled all the charges of the Russian horse. At length, however, the guns, one battery of which was under the immediate command of Lord Cathcart, to whom the Emperor, who was on the spot, had given its direction, were brought to bear upon them. Such was the deadly precision of their fire, that lanes were soon made in one of the squares, and the cavalry breaking in at the apertures, the whole were cut down or made prisoners.²

Meanwhile the intelligence spread like wildfire through

the Russian columns coming up, that the Emperor was in danger. With inconceivable ardour the troops rushed forward : hussars, light dragoons, hulans, and cuirassiers, came up at speed or full trot, thick clouds of dust darkening the air, and at last thirteen thousand were on the field. Still the other squares of the French refused to surrender ; they even fired on the Emperor's aid-de-camp, Rapatel, whom he had adopted as a legacy from Moreau, who fell dead on the spot ; and Alexander, seeing there was nothing else to be done, gave the signal for a general charge. At the head of his chevalier guards, that brave prince threw himself upon the square, and dashed in at one of the openings made by the cannon ; the soldiers, roused to the highest pitch by the presence and danger of their beloved Czar, followed with irresistible fury, and the mass was penetrated on all sides. Still the French, with heroic resolution, refused to submit. Some in tears, others almost frantic with indignation, kept firing till their last cartridge was exhausted ; and Pachtod, in the centre of the square, only surrendered his sword to the Emperor in person. Three thousand of these brave men, many of them national guards, fell nobly resisting on this fatal occasion : their historians justly lament that no monument is erected to their memory by their ungrateful country. Let the first stone in the mausoleum of Famé be laid by their enemies.^{1*}

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31.
Their final
destruction.

¹ Dan. 314,
316. Vaud.
ii. 283, 285,
287. Lond.
287, 292.
Burgh. 230,
231. Vict.
et Conq.
xxiii. 273,
275. Plotho,
iii. 375, 379.
Koch, iii.
390, 392.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
143, 147.

The trophies of the battle of Fere-Champenoise were immense : seven thousand prisoners, two generals of division, four of brigade, eighty guns, two hundred ammunition waggons, with the whole of the convoy and baggage, fell into the hands of the Allies, whose loss did not exceed two thousand five hundred men. Mortier and Marmont were weakened in all by nearly eleven thousand men, and half their artillery—a dreadful loss to two weak corps, upon which, in the absence of the Emperor Napoleon, the defence of Paris had devolved.† The

32.
Results of
these combats.

* Corneille's noble lines apply to those gallant men :—

“ Que des plus nobles fleurs leur tombe soit couverte ;
La gloire de leur mort m' a payé de leur perte :
Ce bonheur a suivi leur courage vaincu,
Qu' ils ont vu Rome libre autant qu' ils ont vécu ;
Et ne l' auront point vue obéir qu' à son prince,
Ni d' un état voisin devenir la province.”

—HORACE, A. iii. S. 6.

† A romantic but melancholy incident occurred on this occasion, which

CHAP. captured generals were received with the most marked
LXXXVIII. distinction and courtesy by the Emperor of Russia, who
1814. invited them immediately to his own table, and paid
them the most deserved compliments on their valour.
The action itself was remarkable for one circumstance, that
it took place on a line of march, and that cavalry alone,
with artillery, utterly broke and inflicted fearful loss on
two corps, consisting of as great numerical force as their
assailants, and four-fifths of whom were infantry, with
an adequate proportion of guns. The number of troops
successively engaged on each side was about twenty-two
thousand; and not a musket was fired on the part of the
Allies, who, by the force of their cavalry and horse artillery
alone, broke all the squares to which they were opposed,
though formed in great part of veteran troops, and took
or destroyed half their number.¹

¹ Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
149, 152.
Ploto, iii.
373. Lond.
292. Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
275. Dan.
316, 317.
Koch, iii.
390, 392.

33.
Reflections
on the impor-
tance of ca-
valry in war.

This remarkable fact is calculated to shake the confidence which military men, by general consent, since the invention of fire-arms, have placed in the ability of infantry to resist the utmost efforts of cavalry in at all equal numbers; and may lead to a doubt whether the opinion of Napoleon is not the better founded—that cavalry still retains the superiority which it enjoyed, in the days when horse first gave Hannibal victory over the Romans at the Ticino and Cannæ, and afterwards, at Zama, rendered Scipio victorious over Hannibal. Certain it is, that it was the decided opinion of Napoleon, that in equal numbers, and equally bravely led, it is still the most important force in war; and that the spread of the opposite opinion, since the decline of chivalry, has arisen from the circumstance of modern generals having never, from the cost with which it is attended, had the means of employing this formidable

deserves to be recorded. When Lord Londonderry, who was among the foremost in the charge, was in the midst of the *mêlée*, he perceived a young and beautiful French lady, the wife of a colonel, in a *calèche*, seized by three Bashkirs, who were proceeding to carry her off. The gallant Englishman immediately rushed forward and rescued her from her lawless oppressors, and, delivering her in charge to his own orderly, directed her to be taken to his own quarters till a place of safety could be procured for her. The orderly accordingly put her *en croupe*, and rode off towards Fere-Champenoise, which was in sight; but on the road he was attacked by a ferocious band of Cossacks, pierced through, and left for dead on the field; while the ruffians seized their victim, who was never more heard of, though the Emperor of Russia, who was greatly moved by the incident, made the utmost efforts to discover what had become of her.—MARQUIS LONDONDERRY'S *War in Germany and France*, 288, 289.

arm in adequate strength, or to an extent commensurate to the revolutions which in all other ages it has produced in the world.*

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These brilliant successes laid open to the Allied armies the road to Paris, now not more than sixty-five miles distant; and they lost no time in pressing forward to the goal. The reduced strength of Marmont and Mortier left these marshals no means of arresting the enemy; all that they could hope for was to retard his advance, to give the Emperor time to come up to their succour. Such, however, was the rapidity with which the Allied advanced guard followed upon their traces, that they had no time to take up a position, or to stop their march. The grand army marched, at four in the morning on the 26th, from Fere-Champenoise, on the direct chaussée through Sezanne, to Paris, while Blucher advanced on two roads, from Vertus on Montmirail, and from Etoges on La Ferté-Gaucher. An attempt was made to reach the latter town before the French, so as to cut off their retreat, and the latter aim was very nearly effected. The Prussians, under Kleist, had received orders to anticipate them at this important point, and their advanced guard had accomplished the task, and established themselves in so solid a manner that all Mortier's efforts to force a passage proved ineffectual. Meanwhile the indefatigable Pahlen, who with the advanced posts of the grand army never lost sight of the enemy, was closely pursuing their rear-guard; and no sooner did he hear the firing at La Ferté-Gaucher, than, foreseeing that they would endeavour to save themselves by a detour to the left, he quitted the high road, and crossing the fields rapidly, reached Maisoncelles, where the head of Mortier's columns had already begun to appear, who had sought this very outlet from otherwise inevitable destruction.¹

34.
Retreat of
Marmont
and Mortier
toward Paris.

March 27.
1 Dan. 320,
322. Burgh.
234, 236.
Plottho, iii.
381, 382.
Vict. et
Cong. xxiii.
277, 279.
Vaud. ii.
289, 297.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
155, 156.

Like Napoleon on the Beresina, the French marshals were on the eve of total destruction; and if Pahlen had been left to himself they would have met it. For their troops, worn out and dejected, were in no condition to withstand the charge of the victorious Russian squadrons; and such

35.
Their narrow
escape.

* "My decided opinion," said Napoleon, "is, that cavalry, supposing the men on both sides to be equal in number, equally brave, and equally well led, must always break infantry."—LAS CASES, vii. 184.

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¹ Burgh. 234.
Dan. 321,
322. Vaud.
ii. 293, 297.
Plotoh, iii.
384. Die
GrosseChron.
iv. 168, 171.

36.
Splendid ap-
pearance of
the Allied
army on the
march to
Paris.

had been their losses in artillery the day before, that they had only seven pieces with them. From this hopeless state they were relieved by the ill-timed prudence of the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg, Pahlen's commander, who was seized with such apprehensions about his artillery being lost in the fields or cross-roads that he ordered Pahlen to return to the highway, which the latter officer, burning with indignation at seeing the enemy thus permitted to escape, reluctantly obeyed. Overjoyed to see him retire, the French immediately drew off their troops from the attack on La Ferté-Gaucher; and, defiling rapidly across the fields to the left, reached Provins through Courtacon. They were followed, however, by the advanced guard of Pahlen's Cossacks; and no sooner were the first spears discerned than, rushing tumultuously out of Provins, they retired in haste to Nangis, from whence, without further loss, they reached the capital; Mortier through Guignes, and Marmont through Melun.¹

Meanwhile the grand army, and that of Blucher, continued their march, without interruption, towards Paris. The Russians of Raefskoi's corps and the Württembergers led the van: then came the Austrians and Bavarians: behind them the guards and grenadiers—all marching along, or on either side of the high road to Meaux. The columns of the army of Silesia were seen like a waving dark line to the right. Indescribable was the enthusiasm of the troops; magnificent the spectacle which the military pageant exhibited. The weather, which for some months before had been so severe and dreary, had now become beautiful, and the rays of the ascending sun were reflected from the glittering arms of the host. Every step was lightsome, joy beamed in every countenance, ardour glanced from every eye, and rendered this triumphant march truly magnificent. A flourish of martial music, the loud roll of the drums, and the louder cheers of the soldiers, announced the presence of the Emperor, as he rode successively up to every regiment. Several times he passed through the guards, and conversed with the generals and officers of corps, many of whom had been trained under his own eye;² often he ascended an eminence on the roadside, to gaze on the vast columns, which were all pressing forward

² Dan. 322,
323.

to the completion of their mighty enterprise. "My children," said the Czar, "it is now but a step to Paris." CHAP. LXXXVIII.
 "We will take it, father," they answered with loud cheers; 1814.
 "we remember Moscow." *

Foreseeing that Napoleon would, in all probability, as soon as he received intelligence of the advance on Paris, endeavour to regain the capital by the circuitous route of Troyes, Sens, and Fontainebleau, the greater part of the next night was employed by the Emperor in despatching orders in all directions, as well to Winzingerode as to Chernicheff, and the other partisans. They were enjoined to preserve the communications to the southward, to keep a vigilant look-out, and forward the earliest intelligence to headquarters of any movement on Napoleon's part of which they could receive advices. Meanwhile, however, Winzingerode himself, having borne the shock of the French Emperor's greatly superior forces, had suffered a severe defeat. Napoleon, as already mentioned, had rested on the 25th at Doulevant, extending his wings in all directions in order to spread alarm in the enemy's rear; and although Winzingerode was in sight of the rearguard, under Macdonald, yet with such diligence had the directions of Alexander been obeyed, that the reports constantly were, that they were followed by the whole Allied army, under the Emperor and Schwartzemberg in person. Meanwhile, the march of a body of French troops towards Chaumonte spread such terror in the rear that the Emperor of Austria, Lord Aberdeen, Counts Razumoffsky and Stadion, and the whole *corps diplomatique* who lay there, were obliged to mount on horseback, and ride thirteen leagues, without drawing bridle, by cross-roads to Dijon. The alarm, swelling as it receded from the real point of danger, spread to the Rhine, where it was universally believed that the whole victorious

37.
 Attack on
 Winzingerode by Napoleon.

March 25.

March 26.

* "An incident occurred on this day, strikingly characteristic of the true magnanimity which warmed the bosom of this great man. On occasion of a deliberation the day before, he had said to Prince Volkonsky, in allusion to some apprehensions he had expressed of the amount of Napoleon's force, "You always see the enemy double." Musing on the displeasure of his sovereign, the prince was riding on, pensive and alone. No sooner did the Emperor see him approach, than he called him to come near, and said publicly, in presence of the King of Prussia and a numerous suite, 'Je vous ai fait tort, hier, et je vous publiquement demande pardon.' Napoleon, though greatly Alexander's superior in genius, could not have done this: he could conquer the world, but not subdue himself."—DANILEFSKY, 323.

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¹ Fain, 187,
188. Vaud.
ii. 314, 316.
Dan. 326,
327. Burgh.
262, 263.
Koch, iii.
548, 550.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
282, 286.

French army was immediately to be upon them. But on the day following, Napoleon, uneasy at the account transmitted by Macdonald, that he saw only horse in the enemy's outposts, began to suspect that he was not in reality followed by the grand army, and gave orders for the troops to retrace their steps towards St Dizier. The reflux tide soon brought an overwhelming force on Winzingerode, who had meanwhile occupied St Dizier with five thousand horse, the remaining three thousand being detached to the front under Tettenborn to gain information.¹

38.
His defeat.

Tettenborn, seeing that he was about to have the whole of Napoleon's army upon his hands, sent word to Winzingerode to send him no reinforcements, as none he could send could enable him to keep his ground, and the troops coming up would only obstruct his retreat. Winzingerode, accordingly, drew up his troops in two lines, extending from St Dizier to the neighbourhood of Perthes, on the right bank of the Marne, hoping by this imposing array to gain time for Tettenborn's advanced guard to retire. The attack of the French, however, was so rapid, and with such overwhelming force, that there were no means whatever of either stopping or retarding it. Their troops deployed with incredible rapidity: column after column descended from the neighbouring plateau into the valley of the Marne: powerful batteries were erected on all the eminences, which sent a storm of round-shot and bombs through the Allied ranks; and under cover of this fire, the French infantry, cavalry, and artillery, crossed the Marne at the ford of Hallignicourt, and forthwith fell on Tettenborn, who was speedily routed, and driven with great loss towards Vitry. Winzingerode's main body was next assailed by ten thousand French cavalry, supported by a large body of infantry; while the succeeding columns of the army, stretching as far as the eye could reach, presented the appearance of an interminable host. The Russian horse were unable to resist the shock; their artillery had time only to fire a few rounds: in a few minutes they were fairly routed. In utter confusion they now made for the road to Bar-le-Duc, where Benkendorff, with a regiment of dragoons and three of Cossacks, with some guns,² had taken up a good

² Dan. 328,
330. Burgh.
263, 264.
Vaud. ii.
316, 318.
Koch, iii.
553.
Ploto, iii.
389. Die
Grosse
Chron. iv.
288.

position, flanked by an impassable morass. By the firm countenance of his brave rearguard, the pursuit was checked; and Winzingerode gained time to re-form his men, and continue his retreat to Bar-le-Duc without further molestation, from whence next day he retired to Chalons. The French loss in this brilliant affair did not exceed seven hundred men, while the Allies were weakened by two thousand, of whom five hundred were made prisoners, and nine pieces of cannon.

This was the last gleam of sunshine which fortune bestowed upon the conqueror who had so long basked in her smiles; henceforth he was involved in one disaster after another, till he was precipitated from the throne. In the first moment of triumph, after his success at St Dizier, he ordered a strong body of troops to approach Vitry; and as the commandant refused to surrender, he marched thither next day himself, ordered a hundred and twenty guns to be planted against it, and threatened in a few hours to reduce the town to ashes. He soon, however, received intelligence which gave him more serious subject of meditation. From the prisoners taken on the field, he learned that Winzingerode's corps consisted only of cavalry and horse artillery, with a few battalions of light infantry, drawn from the garrison of Vitry; and immediately after some peasants came up from Fere-Champenoise with full details of the march of the Allied armies towards Paris, and the disastrous combat which had taken place there two days before, between the retreating marshals and their cavalry. The veil now dropped from before his eyes; all doubt was at an end. It was all but certain that the Allies, fully three days' march ahead, would be in Paris before him. "Nothing but a thunderbolt," said he, "can save us:" and immediately drawing off his whole troops and guns from before Vitry, he retired with his staff to St Dizier, where he shut himself up in his cabinet, and spent the whole night in intently studying the maps. He resolved, after much consideration, instead of pursuing his movement on the Rhenish and frontier fortresses, to return forthwith to Paris; and to avoid the Allied army, which lay between, he chose the road by Doulevant, Vassy, Troyes, Sens, and Fontainebleau.¹ Orders to that effect were immediately

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39.
Napoleon
learns of the
advance of
the Allies
toward
Paris, and
sets out after
them.

March 27.

¹ Die Grosse Chron. iv. 295, 297. Ploto, iii. 399, 400. ² Fain, 193, 196. Dan. 330, 332. Burgh. 265, 266. Vaud. ii. 319, 320.

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40.
Passage of
the Marne by
the Allies.

March 27.

March 28.

¹ Dan. 335,
336. Burgh.
334, 336.
Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
280, 281.
Vaud. ii.
296, 299.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
297, 300.

given, and by daybreak on the morning of the 28th, all the army was in motion by Doulevant for Troyes.

Meanwhile the Allies were not idle. No force capable of even retarding their advance to the capital existed in the field ; and they met with little interruption except at the passage of the Marne. The grand army of Silesia approached this river, which lay directly across their advance to Paris. Count Compans and General Vincent, with five thousand men, were retiring before them, and, like good soldiers, they broke down the bridges over the river, and took post on the opposite bank, at Trilport and Meaux, to dispute the passage. General Emmanuel, with the advanced guard of the army of Silesia, soon came up, and established a bridge of pontoons under the fire of artillery ; the Cossacks crossed over, for the most part, by swimming their horses ; and soon the bridge groaned under the weight of five Prussian regiments, which, with the Russian horse, instantly attacked the enemy, drove them back into Meaux, and, following close on their heels, expelled them from that town. Two bridges were immediately established at Trilport, and one at Meaux ; and the whole on the 28th was employed in transporting the immense masses and convoys of both armies, which, according to the plan concerted, here united, to the right bank of the river. The Emperor then reviewed Sacken's corps, and publicly thanked them for the extraordinary energy and valour they had displayed since the commencement of the campaign. Their diminished numbers, for they were now only six thousand out of twenty thousand who had crossed the Rhine, as well as the bronzed countenances and tattered garments of the men, told the desperate nature of the service which they had gone through. But though their clothes and equipments were worn out, their arms were clean and in good condition, and the artillery train in perfect working order, though the loss by the fracture of an enemy's ball was often supplied by the wheel of a farmer's cart.¹

The Allies had now entered a rich champaign country, adorned with woods, villas, orchards, smiling fields, and all the charming indications of long-established prosperity. It therefore not only abounded with resources of all kinds for the use of the troops, but offered almost irresistible

temptations to the violence and marauding of conquest. This was more especially to be dreaded in a host such as that which now approached Paris, consisting of the soldiers of six different nations, extending from the Rhine to the wall of China, many of them of lawless and half savage habits, all smarting under the recollection of recent wrongs and unbearable oppression. True to the noble principles on which he had throughout maintained the contest, Alexander immediately issued a proclamation to his soldiers, enjoining the strictest discipline, and forbidding any supplies to be obtained for the troops, except through the intervention of the mayors and local authorities.* Not satisfied with this, he addressed with his own hand a circular to the commanders of corps belonging to the other nations, earnestly entreating them to take every possible means to preserve the strictest discipline among their troops.^{1†}

The effect of these measures, not less politic than humane, was immense. A vast crowd of peasantry, indeed, inspired with terror, with their horses and cattle, at first fled into Paris, before the columns of the Allied army; but it was soon discovered that order was preserved by the invaders; and, ere long, the inhabitants remained at home, gazing with amazement at the endless columns of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, which, for days together, defiled past them towards the capital. After the repeated accounts which had been published of the defeat and ruin of the Allied armies, it was with unbounded astonishment that they beheld the extent of their hosts. They

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41.
Alexander's efforts to preserve discipline in the army.

¹ Dan. 334.
Lab. ii. 349.

42.
Their important effect.

* "It is the immutable will of his majesty the Emperor, that the troops under your command should observe the strictest discipline, and on no account whatever leave their bivouacs to go into the villages; and that their wants, such as fire, wood, straw, should not be supplied otherwise than through the intervention of the mayor. You cannot but be aware how much the good conduct of our troops in the present circumstances may influence the common success; and therefore his majesty will hold you personally responsible for the execution of this order."
—ALEXANDER'S *Circular Order*, 26th March 1814; DANILEFSKY, 334.

† "At the moment we are approaching Paris, it is only by the strictest subordination among the troops that we can hope to obtain the important results we have in view. You were one of the first to be convinced of the necessity of gaining over the affections of the inhabitants of Paris to the cause we are defending; but shall we be acting on this conviction, if the villages round Paris be left a prey to plunderers, instead of finding protection in our armies? I earnestly entreat of you to use every possible means to prevent acts of violence. Every commander of a corps, or detachment, should be made personally responsible for whatever disorder may be committed. Your active exertions on this occasion will secure you the general gratitude, and double the high respect I entertain for you."—ALEXANDER to MARSHAL COUNT WREDE, *March 26th 1814*; DANILEFSKY, 334, 335.

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¹ Dan. 334.
335. Lab.
ii. 349. Cap.
x. 440.

admired the superb array of the guards, the dazzling cuirasses of the horsemen, the formidable trains of artillery ; and shuddered when they gazed on the long and desultory array of Cossacks and Bashkirs sweeping by, speaking uncouth tongues, singing oriental songs, giving fearful token of that vast moral revolution which had thus brought the children of the desert into the heart of European civilisation.¹

43.
First sight of
Paris by the
Allied army.

As the Allied troops approached Paris, the resistance of Marmont and Mortier's retiring corps, which had now completed their roundabout march by Nangis and Melun, and interposed between the invaders and the capital, was again felt. Compans' division did not evacuate the forest of Bondy till it had been turned on all sides, and after some sharp firing. Thence the sovereigns inclined to the left, and ascended an eminence on the roadside by a path through bushwood. The sun had just set ; a cool breeze refreshed the air ; there was not a cloud in the sky. All at once, on the right, the buildings of Montmartre appeared, and the stately edifices of PARIS burst upon the view. Indescribable was the sensation which this sight produced. From rank to rank, from mouth to mouth, the thrilling words passed ; in a few seconds the electric shock was felt as far as the eye could reach in the columns ; and all, breaking their order, hurried forward to the front, and crowded up the ascent. The last rays of the sun were still illuminating the dome of the Invalides, the summit of the Pantheon yet reflected his beams ; while they gazed the light ceased, and darkness began to overspread the massy structures of the capital. Forgotten in an instant were the fatigues of the campaign. Wounds, fallen brothers, lost friends, were as nothing. One only feeling, that of exultation, filled every bosom ; one only emotion, that of gratitude, swelled every heart.^{2*} After

² Dan. 338,
339.

* " Ecco apparir Gerusalem si vede,
Ecco additar Gerusalem si scorge,
Ecco da mille voci unitamente
Gerusalemme salutar si sente.

Così di naviganti audace stuolo
Che mova a ricercar estranio lido,
E in mar dubbioso e sotto ignoto polo
Provi l' onde fallaci e 'l vento infido,
S' alfin discopre il desiato suolo,
Il saluta da lunge in lieto grido ;
E l' uno all' altro il mostra, e in tanto oblia
La noja e 'l mal della passata via."

—Ger. Lib. iii. 4.

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inhaling, during several minutes, the entrancing spectacle, the Allied sovereigns, slow and pensive at the very magnitude of their triumph, descended from the height, and proceeded to Bondy, the last post station before Paris, where they passed the night.

And what was the state of Paris—of the great Revolutionary capital—when the danger could no longer be concealed ; when crowds of peasants, flying before the foe, beset the barriers with trembling agitation ; when the rattle of musketry was at last heard in the plain of St Denis, and the illumination of the eastern sky told the affrighted inhabitants that the forces of banded Europe slept round watch-fires at their gates ? Fearful indeed, for eight-and-forty hours, had been the note of preparation within its walls. In vain the agents of the police every where placarded proclamations, assuring the people that the Allies would never venture to attack the immortal city ; that its means of defence were invincible ; that five hundred guns were ready to spread death among the foe ; and that it would be sufficient simply to close the barriers to exterminate them to the last man.* These high-sounding expressions could not conceal the real facts which were before their eyes. They could not make the citizens blind to the endless crowds of peasants in consternation, who defiled in confusion along the Boulevards, conveying with them their wives, their children, their horses and cattle, into the last asylum of the capital.¹

The extreme proposals which the more violent of the Jacobin emissaries promulgated in the name of the Emperor, that they should arm the populace, burn the suburbs, destroy the bridges, barricade the streets, and, if necessary, retire to the south of the Seine, there to defend themselves to the last extremity, till the arrival of the heads

44.
Extreme agitation in Paris during this period.

¹ Lab. ii. 349.
Beauch. ii.
194. Cap. x.
440.

45.
Ineffectual attempts to organise a defence.

* "The Allies regard the pillage and destruction of the capital as the recompense and end of their invasion ; they already make a boast of having entered it without resistance—of having sacked it ; and they propose to send off the *délite* of its workmen, of its artisans, of its artists, to the depths of Russia, to people their deserts, and then they will set fire to all the quarters of the town. But with what hope of success can they enter Paris ? What would become of them in the midst of an immense population, armed, inflamed, and resolute to defend itself ? Paris contains twenty thousand horses, which might convey to the heights five hundred pieces of cannon. It would be easy to barricade the streets, and to offer at every point an invincible resistance. It would be enough even to close the barriers to exterminate them to the last man ! No ! The Allies will never approach Paris !" —*Affiche, Paris, 29th March 1814 ; BEAUCHAMPS, ii. 191, 192.*

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of his columns, augmented the general consternation. Universal spoliation, conflagration, and massacre, were anticipated, from such letting loose of the long pent-up passions of the Revolution. The banks were closed; the shops shut up; every one hid his most valuable moveables; vast quantities of plate and treasure were buried; the gaming-houses were stopped; and, what had been unknown in the bloodiest days of the Revolution, *the theatres were empty*. Preparations were at length making by the government, but they were of a kind to increase rather than diminish the terrors of the people. Six thousand troops of the line, and twenty thousand national guards, were reviewed in the Place Carrousel, and marched along the quays; but the gloomy aspect of the soldiers, the long trains of artillery which traversed the streets, the distant thunder of the enemy's cannon, the ceaseless torrent of disorderly peasants flying before the invaders, which streamed over the Boulevards, and the wounded and dying who were brought in from the advanced posts, told but too plainly that war in all its horrors was fast approaching the mighty capital.¹

¹ Beauch. ii.
191, 194.
Lab. ii. 349,
350. Cap. x.
440.

46.
Deliberation
in the Coun-
cil of State,
as to whether
the Empress
and King of
Rome should
remain in
Paris.

In the midst of the general consternation, the council of state was summoned to deliberate on the grave question, whether or not the Empress and the King of Rome should remain in Paris to await the fate of arms, or be withdrawn to a place of safety beyond the Loire. The minister of war, Clarke, briefly unfolded the military situation of the capital, the troops of the line, artillery, and national guards, who could be assembled for its defence. The forces of the Allies were estimated at a hundred and fifty thousand men; and in these circumstances the minister declared he could not answer for the safety of the Empress and her son. Various opinions as to what should be done followed this exposition. Boulay de la Meurthe, an old republican, proposed that they should convey the Empress to the Hotel de Ville, and show her to the people in the faubourgs, holding her infant in her arms; that now was the time to display the heroism of Maria Theresa.² Savary expounded the means which he could put in motion for rousing the masses: Molé combated the removing the Empress by observing, "that the greatest of all errors, if resistance was determined on, would be to

² Thib. ix.
617, 618.
Sav. vi. 344.
Cap. x. 442,
443.

leave Paris without a government—that left to themselves they would speedily abandon the Emperor.” To this opinion Talleyrand assented. Clarke insisted “that it was a mistake to consider Paris as the centre of the imperial power: that the power of the sovereign would follow him every where; and as long as a village remained in France unoccupied by the enemy, that was his capital.”

On the vote being taken, nineteen out of twenty-three voted for making the contest a popular one, and transporting the Empress and the seat of the government, as in the days of the League, to the Hotel de Ville. When this division was made known, Joseph produced an express order from the Emperor, dated from Rheims not a fortnight before, to the effect that, in no event should they permit the Empress and the King of Rome to fall into the hands of the enemy; that if the Allies approached Paris with forces plainly irresistible, the Empress, with the King of Rome and the great dignitaries of the empire, should be removed to the other side of the Loire; in fine, that he would rather see his son in the Seine than in the hands of the enemy.* This precise and definitive order, which provided for the very case that had occurred, put an end to all deliberation; and it was arranged that Joseph should remain to direct the defence of the capital, but that the principal officers of state should accompany the Empress and the King of Rome beyond the Loire.¹

The departure of the Empress took place next day, and completed the discouragement of the inhabitants of Paris. A great crowd assembled at the Place Carrousel, when the carriages came to the door at daybreak; and though none ventured openly to arraign the orders of government, yet many were the condemnations uttered in private at the timid policy which virtually abandoned the capital

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47.

Joseph produces an order by Napoleon for their removal.

¹ Thib. ix.

617, 618.

Cap. x. 442,

444. Savary,

vi. 344, 345.

48.

Mournful scene at the departure of the Empress. March 29.

* “ You are in no event to permit the Empress and the King of Rome to fall into the hands of the enemy; I am about to manœuvre in such a manner, that you may possibly be several days without hearing from me. Should the enemy advance upon Paris with such forces as to render all resistance impossible, send off in the direction of the Loire the Empress, the King of Rome, the great dignitaries, the ministers, the officers of the senate, the president of the council of state, the great officers of the crown, and the treasure. Never quit my son; and keep in mind that I would rather see him in the Seine than in the hands of the enemies of France. The fate of Astyanax, a prisoner in the hands of the Greeks, has always appeared to me the most deplorable in history.”—NAPOLÉON to JOSEPH, *Rheims, 16th March 1814*; CAPEFIGUE, x. 443, 444.

CHAP.
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1814.

¹ Sav. vii. 1,
3. Thib. ix.
618, 619.
Cap. x. 442,
443. Die
GrosseChron.
iv. 321, 324.

49.
Description
of Paris as a
military sta-
tion.

to the enemy, by withdrawing those whose presence was most calculated to have preserved authority, and stimulated resistance, among its inhabitants. The King of Rome, though only three years of age, cried violently when they came to take him away; he exclaimed that they were betraying his papa, and clung to the curtains of his apartment with such tenacity, that it required all the influence of his governess, Madame de Montesquieu, to induce him to quit his hold. He was still in tears when he was carried down to the carriage of the Empress. Marie Louise was calm and resigned, but deadly pale. At eleven o'clock in the morning the mournful procession set out, and, defiling by the quay of the river, took the road for Rambouillet. The long train of carriages passed slowly along, amidst the tears of a large body of people, while the thunder of the cannon was already heard from the direction of St Denis. Terror now froze every heart; all felt that resistance was hopeless, and that nothing remained but to make the best terms that could be obtained from the victors.¹

Paris, now almost as well known as London to every person in England, whether male or female, who has received a liberal education, may not be equally familiar in future times, or in other countries; and even to those who know it best, it is never irksome to read a description of a city in which some of the happiest days of their life have been spent. Situated on both banks of the Seine, the French metropolis is as favourably adapted for external defence as for internal ornament and salubrity. From Mount Valerius on the west, to the fortress of Vincennes on the east, it is protected by a line of hills running on the northern bank of the Seine, and presenting a natural fortification against an enemy approaching from the north or east, the quarter from which danger is principally to be apprehended. Clichy, Romainville, Belleville, the plateau of Chaumont, Montmartre, are the names which have been affixed to this ridge; and although not strengthened by field-works, yet these natural advantages constituted a very formidable line of defence. The ridge is about three miles and a-half in length, and the woods, orchards, gardens, villas, and enclosures with which it is covered, rendered it in a peculiar manner susceptible of

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defence by a body of militia or national guards, who might be unequal to a combat with regular forces in the open field. The plain of St Denis, between Montmartre and Romainville, extends up to the gates of the capital; but it is enfiladed on either side by the guns from those elevated heights, the fire of batteries on which, intersecting each other, rendered all access by the great road from St Denis impossible, till the summits were carried. Montmartre, a conical hill which rises to a considerable height, and is nearly covered with buildings, presented, if adequately furnished with cannon, a most formidable point for defence; but the positions of Chaumont, Belleville, and Menilmontant, were less compact and more open to a flank attack. The whole defence of the capital, however, depended on the possession of these heights: if they were taken, Paris was at the mercy of the conqueror. Bombs from Montmartre and Chaumont would carry as far as the Rue Montblanc, and into the very heart of the city; the old ramparts had long since been converted into shady walks, well known as the principal scene of enjoyment in the capital; and the barriers on the principal roads, connected together by a brick wall, presented the means only of preventing smuggling, or aiding the efforts of the police, but could oppose no resistance whatever to the attack of regular soldiers.¹

¹ Personal observation. Koch, iii. 415, 429. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 283, 284.

What chiefly strikes a stranger on his first arrival in Paris, is the extraordinary variety and beauty of the public edifices. The long-established greatness of the French sovereigns, the taste for architecture which several of them possessed, and the durable materials of which the capital is built, have conspired, in a succession of ages, to store it with a series of public and private edifices, which are not only for the most part exceedingly imposing in themselves, but in the highest degree interesting, from the picture they present of the successive changes of manners, habits, and taste, during the prolonged lifetime of the monarchy. From the stately remains of the baths of Julian, now devoted to the humble purpose of a cooper's warehouse in the faubourg St Germain, to the recent magnificent structures projected by Napoleon, and executed by the Bourbons, it exhibits an unbroken series of buildings, still entire, erected during fifteen centuries,

50.
Description of the buildings of Paris.

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connecting together the ancient and modern world, and forming, like Gibbon's History of Rome, a bridge which spans over the dark gulf of the middle ages. The towers of Notre Dame, which rose amidst the austerity of Gothic taste, and were loaded with the riches of Catholic superstition; the Hotel de Ville, the florid architecture of which recalls the civil wars of the Fronde and the League; the Marais, with its stately edifices, carrying us back to the rising splendour of the Bourbon princes; the Louvre, which witnessed the frightful massacre of Charles IX.; the Pont Neuf, which bears the image of Henry IV.; the Tuileries, recalling at once the splendour of Louis XIV., and the sufferings of his martyred descendant; the Place Louis XV., which beheld in succession the orgies of royalty and the horrors of the Revolution; the column of the Place Vendôme, which perpetuates the glories of Napoleon—present a series of monuments unequalled in interest by any other city of modern Europe, and which may possibly, to future ages, exceed even the attractions of the Eternal City itself. Every step in Paris is historical; the shadows of the dead arise on every side; the very stones breathe.

51.
Its architectural splendour.

The streets in the old part of the town are narrow, and consequently, perhaps, unhealthy; but their straitness only renders them the more imposing, their buildings being always seen in rapid perspective. The old stone piles, often five stories in height, some of them contemporary with the Crusades, seem to frown with contempt on the modern passenger. It was in these narrow streets, the focus of the Revolution, that the great bulk of the inhabitants, estimated in all at that period at six hundred thousand souls, dwelt. On the banks of the river a wider space is seen. Light arches span the stream, and long lines of pillared scenery attest the riches and taste of a more refined age. Nor is the beauty of architectural monuments inferior to the interest of ancient associations. The colossal proportions, and yet delicate finishing, of the arch of Neuilly; the exquisite peristyle of the church of the Madeleine; the matchless façade of the Louvre;¹ the noble portico of the Pantheon; the lofty column of Austerlitz, will ever attract the cultivated in taste from every quarter of Europe, even after the political greatness of

¹ Personal observation.

France has declined, and its glories exist only in the records of historic fame.*

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The troops which remained at the disposal of Joseph, for the defence of the heights of Paris, were very inconsiderable, and altogether inadequate to the defence of so extensive a position. The national guard, indeed, was thirty thousand strong, but not more than half of this number were armed; and they were, for the most part, absorbed in the guarding of the twelve barriers of the city, or the service of the interior: so that not more than five thousand were available for service on the external defences. Marmont commanded the right, which rested on Belleville and Chaumont, with detachments on all the points susceptible of defence, as far as Vincennes; and Mortier the left, which extended between the canal of Oureq and Montmartre, across the great road from St Denis, with posts as far as Neuilly. It was easy to foresee that the weight of the contest would be around the hill of Montmartre and the *buttes* of Chaumont, and it was there, accordingly, that the main strength of the enemy was placed. The wreck of fifteen divisions stood on the line of defence, which, in former days, would have contained at least ninety thousand combatants; but so wasted had they been under the dreadful campaigns of the last two years, that they could not now muster more than twenty thousand infantry and six thousand horse. In Marmont's wing, the skeletons of seventy battalions were required to make up eight thousand men. Their air was firm, but sad: they were resolved to lay down their lives for their country; but they knew the enemy they had to combat, and were aware it would be in vain.¹

Including the national guards, who were without the barriers, and all the depots which had been brought forward, not more than thirty-five thousand men took part in the defence; but they were supported by a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, fifty-three of which were of position, some on the extreme right being manned

52.
Forces of the
French on
the line of
defence.

1 Koch, iii.
449, 450.
Vaud. ii. 310,
312. Burgh.
238. Dan.
347. Plotho,
iii. 403. Die
Grosse Chron.
iv. 307, 309,
314.

53.
And of the
Allies.

* They may well put the architects of England to the blush, for the painful inferiority which the modern structures of London exhibit. The *modern* structures, observe. Nothing worthy of the nation has been built in public edifices in London in our time. Compare St Paul's or Westminster Abbey with the National Gallery, and say whether we have not fallen from a race of giants to a brood of pigmies.

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1 Vaud. ii.
310, 313, 328.
Koch, iii.
Burgh. 238.
Dan. 347,
348. Plotho,
iii. 403, 404.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
340.

54.
Schwartz-
berg's pro-
clamation to
the Allied
army.

by the young men of the Polytechnic school. Of the Allies, a hundred thousand combatants were in line, and ready to take part in the attack; the remainder of the force being left behind on the Marne, at Trilport and Meaux, to guard the communications and keep an eye on the movements of Napoleon. That great commander, as already mentioned, had projected the erection of powerful fortifications on the heights now threatened by the Allies, after his return from Austerlitz in 1806,* and had been only prevented by the dread of awakening the Parisians from their slumber of security under the shadow of the glory of the great nation. Memorable warning! How often is national security endangered, or national existence shortened, by heedless pride or shortsighted economy obstructing the sagacious foresight of prophetic wisdom, requiring present sacrifice in money, or threatening a passing mortification to vanity!¹

Joseph, on the 29th, published a spirited proclamation to his troops and the inhabitants of Paris, in which he exhorted them to combat bravely to maintain their ground until the arrival of the Emperor, who might be hourly expected.† Schwartzberg, on his part, with the approbation of the Allied sovereigns, issued a remarkable address to the inhabitants of Paris, in which the precise language was used which Louis XVI., two-and-twenty years before, had recommended to the Allied sovereigns as the only tone which was likely to vanquish the Revolution, by declaring war on it, but not on France; but which had been then and since unaccountably forgotten amidst the ambition and separate interests of the potentates who composed the alliance.‡ The allusions in this procla-

* *Ante*, Chap. lvii. § 73.

† "Citizens of Paris! A column of the enemy has advanced to Meaux. It approaches by the road of Germany; but the Emperor follows it closely, at the head of a victorious army. The Council of the Regency has provided for the safety of the Empress and the King of Rome. I remain with you. Let us arm to defend our capital—its monuments, its riches, our wives, our children, all that is dear to us. Let this great city become a camp for a few instants; and let the enemy find his shame under those walls which he hopes to pass in triumph. The Emperor marches to our succour: second him by a brief and vigorous resistance, and we shall preserve the honour of France."—THIBAUDEAU, ix. 619, 620.

‡ "Inhabitants of Paris! The allied armies are under your walls. The object of their march to the capital of France is founded on the hope of a sincere and durable pacification with her. For twenty years Europe has been deluged with blood and tears. Every attempt to put an end to these calamities has proved vain; for this reason, that in the very government which oppresses you, there has been found an insurmountable obstacle to peace. Who among you is not convinced of this truth? The allied sovereigns desire to find in France

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mation to the insatiable spirit of conquest with which all the governments of France for twenty years had been animated, and to the facility with which peace might be obtained, on honourable terms, by France, and to the example of Bordeaux, where Louis XVIII. had already been proclaimed, pointed, not obscurely, to a restoration of the exiled princes as the sole condition on which, since the rupture of the negotiations at Chatillon, the Allies considered it possible that a pacification could be effected. They had already erected the conquered districts into a sort of province, with the direction of which the Comte D'Artois, who was at Vesoul, was intrusted. The proclamation, with a proposal for the capitulation of Paris, was sent to the French advanced posts; but the French marshals, like brave and faithful men, rejected it, and resolved to maintain their posts to the last extremity.¹

¹ Dan. 345,
346. Cap. x.
438, 439.
Burgh. 234.

At two in the morning of the 30th March the *générale* beat in all the quarters of Paris, to summon the national guard to assemble at their different points of rendezvous. One-and-twenty years had elapsed since, at the same hour, it had called them, amidst the clang of the tocsin, to muster for the defence of the throne on the 10th August 1793. They had then failed at the decisive moment—they had basely surrendered their sovereign to an infuriated rabble, and abandoned the nation to the government of the multitude.* They now had their reward. They were to witness the degradation and punishment of their country, the defeat of its armies, the overthrow of its independence; the iron was to enter into the soul of the nation. Bravely, however, they repaired to their posts, amidst the tears of their wives and children,

55.
Commence-
ment of the
action, and
Allied dispo-
sition of
attack.
March 30.

a beneficent government, which shall strengthen her alliance with all nations; and therefore, in the present circumstances, it is the duty of Paris to hasten the general pacification. We await the expression of your opinion, with a degree of impatience proportioned to the mighty consequences which must result from your determination. Declare it: and you shall at once find defenders in the armies standing before your walls. Parisians! the state of France, the proceedings of the inhabitants of Bordeaux, the peaceable occupation of Lyons, and the real sentiments of your countrymen, are known to you. In these examples you will find the end of war and domestic discord: it is to be found nowhere else. The preservation of your city and of your tranquillity, shall be the object of the prudent measures which the allies will not fail to take, in concert with such of your authorities as enjoy the general confidence. Troops shall not be quartered upon you. Such are the sentiments with which Europe, arrayed before your walls, now addresses you. Hasten to justify her confidence in your patriotism and prudence."—See DANILEFSKY, 345, 346; and CAPEFIGUE, I. 458, and *Die Grosse Chronik*, iii. 332.

* *Ante*, Chap. vii. § 93.

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who never expected to see them more. Hardly had the clock in the church of St Denis struck five in the morning, when the anxious eyes from the summit of the heights of Romainville discovered several dark masses appearing beyond Pantin, on the road to Meaux. Still not a gun was fired on either side; the level glance of the sun illuminated the peaceful slopes of Romainville, and the gilded dome of the Invalides was only beginning to lighten before his rays. Suddenly the discharge of artillery was heard on the right; the dark mass quickly became edged with fire; and soon the roar of several hundred pieces of cannon announced to the trembling inhabitants of the capital that the last day of the Revolution had arrived. Raeffskoi, supported by the reserves of Barclay, was charged with the attack of the French centre, between Pantin and Vincennes, and especially the heights of Belleville; the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg, supported by Giulay's Austrians on the left, was to assail the bridges of the Marne at St Maur and Charenton, to clear the wood of Vincennes, blockade its castle, and threaten the Barriere du Trone. On the right the army of Silesia was to advance on Montmartre on two sides; Count Langeron from Clichy and St Denis; Kleist, York, and Woronzoff, on the Allied left, from the villages of La Villette and La Chapelle. Above a hundred thousand men were destined to co-operate in the attack; but they did not all arrive in action at the same time; the weight of the contest long fell on Raeffskoi and Barclay alone in the centre, and thence the unlooked-for continuance and bloody nature of the strife.¹

¹ Dan. 348,
349. Vaud.
ii. 330, 331.
Burgh. 237,
238. Koch,
iii. 451, 452.
Vict. et Conq.
xxiii. 293,
294. Die
Grosse Chron.
iv. 344, 347.

56.
Repulse of
the Russians
in the centre.

² Vaud. ii.
332, 333.
Dan. 353,
354. Burgh.
240. Koch,
iii. 453, 460.
Ploto, iii.
405, 407. Die
Grosse Chron.
iv. 345, 347.

At six in the morning the firing of musketry began in the centre, by Prince Eugene of Würtemberg, with his division, issuing from the village of Pantin; while Raeffskoi himself, with Gorchakoff's infantry and Pahlen's cavalry, moved direct on Romainville. Marmont, however, convinced of the error which had been committed in not holding these villages the evening before, was advancing to occupy them with Boyer's division of the Young Guard, when he met Prince Eugene's Russians on an eminence a little beyond Pantin. A furious conflict immediately commenced, which soon extended to Romainville: the numbers were equal, the resolution and skill on the opposite sides well matched;² and so bloody

was the combat, that in a short time fifteen hundred of the Russians had fallen. Mortier, finding he was not attacked, sent two divisions to aid Marmont, and with their aid the Russian cuirassiers were routed, and Prince Eugene driven back, still bravely fighting, into the villages.

Feeling himself unequal to such a conflict for any considerable time, he wrote to Barclay, representing his situation, but declaring his resolution to die at his post;* and shortly afterwards, Raeffskoi, having completed his circular march, commenced operations on the left. His infantry carried Montreuil, and his cavalry pushed on to Charonne, nearly in the rear of the Young Guard at Romainville, which checked the advance of Marmont's victorious division, but still decided nothing. It was now eight o'clock, and the Emperor of Russia had just arrived on the field of battle, uncertain of the force of the enemy, or of the probable time of Napoleon's approach: he learned with dismay that Blucher's forces had not yet reached the neighbourhood of Montmartre—that the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg and Giulay were still far behind, on the left—and that Raeffskoi was overmatched and his men fast falling, in the centre. Instantly perceiving the danger, the Emperor immediately ordered Barclay to bring up the grenadiers, and Russian and Prussian guards, to the support of Raeffskoi; and soon these noble troops were seen marching in double quick time, on the road to Pantin.¹

Their arrival at the scene of danger speedily changed the face of affairs. Prince Eugene, long oppressed by superior numbers, now in his turn had the advantage. General Mesenzoff advanced at the head of three Russian divisions of the guards to the support of Raeffskoi; and their united force, finding that it was impossible to advance in the plain till the heights were carried, from the summit of which the French guns vomited forth death on all sides, made a general attack on the wooded hills of Romainville, which were carried after a most desperate conflict. The French who occupied them were driven back to the heights in the rear of Menilmontant and Belleville. At

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57.
Heroic resistance of the Russians there.

¹ Dan. 353, 354. Vaud. ii. 332, 334. Vict. et Conq. xxiii. 296, 297. Burgh. 240. Koch, iii. 453, 460, 471. Die Grosse Chron. iv. 344, 347. Plötho, iii. 405.

58.
The Emperor brings up the guards, which restores the battle there.

* His words were—"The second corps is ready and willing to be sacrificed: think of us and help us." Barclay answered—"Many thanks for your resolution: the grenadiers are prepared to reinforce you."—DANILEFSKY, 359

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¹ Dan. 355,
356. Burgh.
241. Koch,
iii. 461, 464.
Vaud. ii.
334, 336.
Plotho, iii.
404, 406.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
349, 351.
Valentini, ii.
205.

the same time, as the Prince-Royal of Würtemberg had not yet come up, Count Pahlen pushed forward a body of his dragoons towards Vincennes, who, meeting with no opposition, approached the Barriere du Trone, where twenty guns, manned by the scholars of the Polytechnic School, received them with a point-blank discharge. Hardly, however, was the first round fired, when the Russian hulans made a dash in flank at the guns, which were taken, with the gallant youths who served them; and the seizure of the gate itself was only prevented by the national guard, who checked the pursuit.* Meanwhile Barclay, having, by the aid of the guards and grenadiers, at length dislodged the enemy from the heights of Pantin and Romainville, gave orders to suspend the attack in the centre, until the arrival of the army of Silesia on the right, and the corps of Giulay and the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg on the left, enabled the whole army to take the parts assigned them in the battle.¹

59.
Appearance
of the army
of Silesia on
the right.

At eleven o'clock, standards and armed bodies of men were seen by the anxious crowds who thronged the heights of Montmartre around St Denis, which soon, widening and extending, moved steadily forward, till, like a huge black wave, they overspread the whole plain which stretches from thence to the capital. It was the vast host of the army of Silesia, which, dividing into two columns as it approached Montmartre, streamed in endless files, the one half towards La Villette, on the great road to the barrier of St Denis, the other in the direction of Neuilly, as if to turn that important post by the extreme French left. York and Kleist were on the great road, moving direct on Paris, Langeron on the Allied right, moving to turn the enemy's flank. The defence of La Villette and La Chapelle was most obstinate. For four long hours Mortier's troops, with heroic resolution, made good their post against the constantly increasing masses and reiterated attacks of the Prussians; and it was not till Woronzoff brought up his iron bands of Russian veterans, with the 13th and 14th light infantry

* One of these boys was overthrown into a ditch, where a Cossack had his spear uplifted to pierce him, when a Russian lancer, touched with his youth and valour, stayed his arm, saying, "Pas tuez le jeune Français."—Koch, iii. 472.

at their head, that the batteries which commanded the village were carried, and the French driven out. Meanwhile Marmont, being reinforced, again made dispositions for an attack on Pantin. Barclay upon that ordered the Prussian and Baden guards to march out and attack the enemy; and these splendid troops, led by their gallant colonel, Alvensleben, rushed on the enemy with such impetuosity, that they were speedily broken and driven back almost to the barriers of Pré St Gervais. Such was the admiration which this charge excited in the breast of Alexander, who witnessed it, that with his own hands he took the cross of St George off the neck of the Archduke Constantine, who stood near him, and sent it to the Prussian commander while he and his troops were in the thick of a running fire. The flattering badge being put on his breast on the spot, the men set up a shout which was heard above all the roar of the battle.¹

At length, about one o'clock in the afternoon, the heads of the columns of the hereditary Prince of Würtemberg arrived at the extreme Allied left; and although Giulay's Austrians had not yet made their appearance, he immediately commenced operations. The wood of Vincennes was occupied almost without opposition; the castle blockaded; the bridge of St Maur, with eight guns, carried by storm, and the French driven back with severe loss to Charenton. Both wings having thus come up at last, the Emperor ordered a general attack along the whole line. The Allies formed, as at Leipsic and Arcis-sur-Aube, a vast convex, stretching from Charenton on the extreme left, to the neighbourhood of Neuilly on the right; the French a concave, facing outwards, and which was gradually falling back to the barriers. Lange-ron was ordered to carry Montmartre, cost what it might; while Raefskoi and Prince Eugene, supported by Barclay's reserves and the grenadiers, again renewed the attack on the centre. This grand assault, now made with greatly superior forces, and at all points at the same time, proved entirely successful. The conquerors rushed forward in the order followed in the desperate assault of Ismael, and with as rapid success.² In vain the French generals and officers did all in their power, by standing in front of their columns, and exposing themselves to the uttermost,

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¹ Dan. 357,
358. Burgh.
241, 242.
Plotoh, iii.
406, 407.
Vaud. ii. 336,
338. Koch,
iii. 465, 476.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
354, 357.

60.
And of the
Prince of
Würtemberg
on the left.

² Dan. 360.
Burgh. 242,
243. Vaud.
ii. 342, 352.
Koch, iii.
639, 646.
Vict. et Conq.
xxiii. 342,
343. Plotoh,
iii. 413, 414.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
363, 369.

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61.

Storming of
the heights
which com-
mand Paris.

to animate their men and lead them back into action. Heroism and patriotism did their best to resist, but they did it in vain. An invincible spirit was roused among mankind; the Almighty fiat had gone forth, its instrument was the indignation of oppressed humanity, and France was to undergo the punishment of the Revolution.

Flashing in the rays of a brilliant sun, the Russian and Prussian colours were carried forward from one summit to another, till every obstacle was surmounted, and Paris lay at their feet. The Prussians, under the gallant Prince William, after a desperate struggle carried the bridge over the canal of Ourcq, and expelled Mortier's men, at the point of the bayonet, out of La Villette. Charpentier's veterans of the guards retired, furious with indignation, and still even in retreat keeping up a deadly and unquenchable fire on their pursuers. Pitchnitsky's division of the Russians carried the barriers of Pré St Gervais, and made themselves masters of seventeen guns which had been planted there; ten more yielded to the impetuous assault of the Prussian and Baden guards; Prince Gortchakoff forced Charonne; the burying-ground at Mont Louis with eight, the battery of Menilmontant with seven guns, were successively stormed; the inmost recesses of the wood of Romainville were the theatre of mortal conflict; the village of Bagnolet was forced at the same time by Mesenzoff. The external defences of the French centre being thus all carried about the same time, the whole Allied centre, amidst deafening shouts, converging together, rushed simultaneously into Belleville. Following up their successes, the advanced guards, with breathless haste, toiled to the summit of the Butte de Chaumont; the level plateau was speedily covered with troops; the splendid capital of France burst on their view; the cry, "Fire on Paris, fire on Paris!" arose on all sides, and, amidst cheers which were heard over the whole battlefield, twenty howitzers were brought forward, which speedily sent their bombs as far as the Chaussée d'Antin. The first shot was fired from a Russian battery of light artillery, which was the last that evacuated Moscow; and on both occasions was under the direction of General Milaradowitch.¹

¹ Dan. 360,
361. Burgh.
342, 343.
Koch, iii.
474, 477.
Vaud. ii. 362,
365. Vict. et
Cong. xxiii.
303, 307.
Ploto, iii.
407, 411, 414.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
368, 371.

All of a sudden the troops received orders to halt at all points, and it was soon known that a capitulation had been concluded. Joseph no sooner perceived that the Allied armies were about to throw the French troops back upon Paris, than he authorised the marshals to enter into a capitulation. This injunction was given by Joseph at a quarter past twelve; but it was not till the plateau of Chaumont was stormed, and the Russian bombs began to fall in the city, that the French marshals rightly judged that the defence could no longer be prolonged. In fact, in half an hour more the French troops, driven headlong down the steep descent which leads from the plateau to the town, would have been irrecoverably routed, and the conquerors would have entered the gates with them. They, in concert, accordingly despatched an officer to the Emperor Alexander, who was on the summit of the hill of Romainville, to request an armistice. The Emperor answered, with dignity, that he acceded to the proposition, but on condition only that Paris was immediately surrendered. As the officer had no power to accede to such a condition, Colonel Orloff returned with him to Marshal Marmont, whom he found in the first line, with his sword drawn, encouraging his worn-out battalions. The terms were at once agreed to, and the French were immediately to evacuate all the positions without the gates, including Montmartre. Orders were soon after despatched in all directions to stop the firing. So warm, however, was the conflict, so exasperated were the soldiers on the opposite sides, that it was with great difficulty that they could be separated; the enthusiastic cheers of the Allies made the air resound over the adjacent parts of Paris; and when the firing ceased, the last sounds that were heard were from Curial's veterans of the Old Guard, who still shouted "Vive l'Empereur!"¹

To the loud roar of the artillery, the incessant clang of the musketry, the cries and cheers of the combatants, now succeeded a silence yet more awful, during which the terms of the capitulation were under discussion, and the fate of six hundred thousand human beings depended on a few words from the Emperor of Russia. Meanwhile the French troops, in the deepest dejection, many of them with tears mingling with the blood on their cheeks,

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62.

A suspension
of arms is
agreed to on
both sides.

¹ Dan. 363,
365. Cap. x.
464, 465.
Sav. vii. 11,
13. Burgh.
247. Lond.
299, 300.
Ploto, iii.
414. Valen-
tini, ii. 207,
209.

63.

General oc-
cupation of
the heights.

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withdrew within the barriers. The Allied column, who had now all come up in great strength, and exulting in their triumphs, were immediately every where brought forward to the front, and formed a sublime spectacle. From the banks of the Marne to those of the Seine, on a vast semicircle of six miles, the troops rested on their arms. The different lines were placed near each other, so as to form a continued close column. Artillery bristled on all the heights, cavalry filled all the plains; a hundred thousand men, leaning on their arms, and three hundred pieces of caanon, with the matches burning, were ready to pour the vials of wrath on the devoted city. Alexander, with all his suite, rode on to the plateau of Chaumont; Paris lay spread like a map at his feet. The descending sun, which cast its rays over its vast assemblage of domes and palaces, seemed to supplicate him to imitate its beneficence, and shine alike upon the just and the unjust. He was not wanting to his glorious destiny.¹

¹ Dan. 366,
367. Koch,
iii. 467.
Vaud. ii.
369, 370.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
387, 389.

64.
Storming of
Montmartre,
which closes
the battle.

But ere the terms could be agreed to, loud cheers, followed by a tremendous fire, were heard on the right; Montmartre was speedily enveloped in smoke, and for some time all were in suspense watching the dreadful struggle, the last of the northern campaign, which was there going forward. In a quarter of an hour, however, the thunders ceased; the well-known Russian hurrah resounded through the air; Russian standards were descried on the summit of the hill; and soon the arrival of messengers announced, that before intelligence of the suspension had reached them, Count Langeron, ascending from the extreme right of the Allied line on the side of Clichy, had carried this stronghold by assault. Such was the vigour of the storm, that of thirty guns planted on the hill, twenty-nine were taken; and in ten minutes from the time when the attack commenced, the Russian colours waved on its summit, although the preparations for defence appeared so formidable that the brave Rudzewitz, who led the assault, took leave of his brother officers, as advancing to certain death, before he entered the fire. No sooner was the hill carried, than Langeron chased the French back into Paris, and immediately brought up eighty-four guns, which were planted on its summit, pointed towards the capital. "So Father Paris! you

must now pay for Mother Moscow," exclaimed a Russian artilleryman, with the medal of 1812 on his bosom, as he approached his match to the touch-hole of his cannon. As soon as the suspension of arms, however, was agreed to, a white flag was displayed from the telegraph on the top of Montmartre, the soldiers piled their arms, and the bands of all the regiments, advancing to the most elevated points around, made the air resound with martial and triumphant strains. By a singular coincidence, the last action in the war took place on an eminence which still bears its Roman name of the Hill of Mars, and where, fifteen hundred years before, St Denis suffered martyrdom, who first introduced Christianity into Northern Gaul.¹ *

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¹ Dan. 366,
368. Plotho,
iii. 414.
Koch, iii.
647, 658.
Vaud. ii.
369, 371.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
380, 382.
Varnhagen
von Ense,
433.

The battle of Paris, the last scene in this mighty drama, was also on the side of the Allies, and, considering the number opposed to them, one of the most bloody. They lost not less than 9093 men, of whom 153 were Würtembergers, 1840 Prussians, and 7100 Russians — a clear proof upon whom the weight of the contest had fallen, and with whom its principal glory should rest. They took eighty-six pieces of cannon on the field, two standards, and a thousand prisoners; and the guns of the national guard, seventy-two in number, were given up by capitulation. The French loss was much less severe, and did not exceed 4500 men. The reason of this great disproportion between the loss of the victorious and vanquished army, was not so much the strength of the French position, or the effect of their formidable heavy batteries on the Allied columns, as the circumstance that Blucher did not receive his orders in time to make his attack on the right simultaneous with Raefskoi's in the centre; and that the Prince-royal of Würtemberg did not come up till the very last attack, at two o'clock in the afternoon, after the battle had lasted eight hours.² Thus, during the greater part of the day, the opposite sides were nearly equally matched in respect of number at the points engaged, though, when all their troops came

65.
Results of
the battle.

² Dan. 371.
Plotho, iii.
416, 417.
Vaud. ii. 372,
373. Koch,
iii. 488, 506.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
385.

* Montmartre—Mons Martis. St Denis, the patron saint of France, suffered martyrdom there in the year 241. His remains, cast into the Seine, were raised by a pious widow near Chaillot, and interred in a wheat field, where the church of St Denis now stands, and the mausoleum of the kings of France has been constructed.—See THIERRY, *Gaule sous la Domination Romaine*, ii. 324, 325.

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66.
Napoleon
receives intel-
ligence of the
Allied ad-
vance.

up, the Allies were three to one. Nevertheless, the resistance of the French army, from first to last, was most heroic: they yielded their capital, in the end, only to the forces of banded Europe; and this day may justly be considered as adding another to the immortal wreath of laurels which encircles their brows.

"If the Allies were encamped," said Napoleon in the senate, on the 30th March 1813, "on the heights of Montmartre, I would not surrender one village in the thirty-second military division," (the Hanse Towns.) On that day year—on the 30th March 1814—the Allies *were encamped* on the heights of Montmartre; but he was obliged to surrender, not a village in the north of Germany, but his crown and his empire. No sooner was the Emperor made aware, while on his return to Paris, that the Allies were approaching its walls, than he despatched on the 29th his aid-de-camp, General Dejean, from Doulencourt, to announce his immediate return to the capital; and to intimate that negotiations were renewed, through the medium of Austria and Prince Metternich, with the Allied powers. Dejean had reached Mortier, after incredible exertions, about three o'clock, as he was bravely combating the Prussians in front of La Villette. The marshal immediately despatched a flag of truce to Schwarzenberg, with a letter written on a drum-head, intimating the resumption of the negotiations, and proposing an armistice. The Allied generals, however, were too well informed to fall into the snare; and a polite answer was returned by the generalissimo, stating "that the intimate and indissoluble union which subsists between the sovereign powers, affords a sure guarantee that the negotiations which you suppose are on foot separately between Austria and France, have no foundation; and that the reports which you have received on that head are entirely groundless." The attempt to avert the evil hour thus completely failed, and it was shortly after that Marmont and Mortier jointly concluded the armistice for the evacuation of Paris.¹

¹ Mortier to Schwarzenberg, March 30, 1814; and Reply, Sav. vii. 10, 11. Fain, 198, 199.

Meanwhile Napoleon, every hour more alarmed, was straining every nerve to reach the capital. On the 29th the Imperial Guard and equipages arrived at Troyes late at night, having marched above forty miles in that single

day. After a few hours' rest he threw himself into his travelling carriage, and, as the wearied cuirassiers could no longer keep pace with him, set out alone for Paris. Courier after courier was despatched before him, to announce his immediate return to the authorities of the capital; but as he approached it, the most disastrous intelligence reached him every time he changed horses. He learned successively that the Empress and his son had quitted Paris; that the enemy were at its gates; that they were fighting on the heights. His impatience was now redoubled: he got into a little post *calèche* to accelerate his speed; and although the horses were going at the gallop, he incessantly urged the postilions to press on faster. The steeds flew like the winds; the wheels took fire in rolling over the pavement: yet nothing could satisfy the Emperor. At length by great exertions he reached Fromenteau, near the fountains of Juvisy, only five leagues from Paris, at ten at night. As his horses were there changing at the post-house called Cour de France, some straggling soldiers who were passing announced, without knowing the Emperor, that Paris had capitulated. "These men are mad!" cried Napoleon, "the thing is impossible: bring me an officer!" At the very moment General Belliard came up and gave the whole details of the catastrophe. Large drops of sweat stood on the Emperor's forehead: he turned to Caulaincourt and said, "Do you hear that?" with a fixed gaze that made him shudder. At this moment the Seine only separated the Emperor from the enemy's advanced posts on the extreme Allied left, in the plain of Villeneuve St George's; their innumerable watch-fires illuminated the whole north and east of the heavens; while the mighty conqueror, in the darkness, followed only by two post carriages and a few attendants, received the stroke of fate.¹

Berthier now came up, and Napoleon immediately said he must set out to Paris. "Caulaincourt, order the carriage!" Unable to restrain his anxiety to get forward, he set out on foot, accompanied by Berthier and Caulaincourt, speaking incessantly as he hurried on, without waiting for an answer, or seeming to be conscious of their presence. "I burned the pavement," said he; "my horses

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67.
His rapid
return to
the neigh-
bourhood of
Paris.

¹ Fain, 198,
199, 203.
Caul. ii. 356,
358. Koch,
iii. 561, 562.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
393, 394.

68.

His remark-
able conver-
sation on
hearing of
the fall of
Paris.

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were as swift as the wind ; but still I felt oppressed with an intolerable weight : something extraordinary was passing within me. I asked them only to hold out four-and-twenty hours. Miserable wretches that they are ! Marmont, too, who had sworn that he would be hewn in pieces rather than surrender ! And Joseph ran off too—my very brother ! To surrender the capital to the enemy—what poltroons ! They had my orders ; they knew that on the 2d April I would be here at the head of seventy thousand men. My brave scholars, my national guard, who had promised to defend my son—all men with a heart in their bosoms—would have joined to combat at my side. And so they have capitulated—betrayed their brother, their country, their sovereign, degraded France in the eyes of Europe ! Entered into a capital of eight hundred thousand souls without firing a shot ! It is too dreadful ! That comes of trusting cowards and fools ! When I am not there, they do nothing but heap up blunder on blunder. What has been done with the artillery ? They should have had two hundred pieces, and ammunition for a month. Every one has lost his head ; and yet Joseph imagines he can lead an army, and Clarke is vain enough to think himself a minister ; but I begin to think Savary is right, and that he is a traitor. Set off, Caulaincourt ; fly to the Allied lines ; penetrate to headquarters, you have full powers ; fly, fly !” He still insisted upon following with Belliard and the cavalry, who had already evacuated Paris ; but upon the repeated assurances of that officer that the capitulation was concluded, and the capital in the hands of an army of a hundred and twenty thousand men, he at length agreed to return, rejoined his carriages, which he had preceded by above a mile, and, after ordering the retiring corps to take a position at Essonne, set out for Fontainebleau, which he reached at six in the morning.¹

¹ Caul. ii. 358, 361.
Koch, iii. 562, 564.
Die Grosse Chron. iv. 394, 395.

69.
Preparations
of the Allies
for entering
Paris.

While these mournful scenes were passing at the solitary headquarters of the French Emperor, very different was the spectacle which the victorious camp of the Allies exhibited. It was there universally known that the troops were to enter Paris on the following morning ; and orders had been issued that all those who were to accompany the Emperor of Russia and King of Prussia should

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appear in their gala dresses, and with their arms and accoutrements in the best possible order. In great part of the troops, especially the corps of Blucher's army, the clothing was almost worn out; hardly an entire uniform was to be seen; many of the men were arrayed in a motley garb, stripped from the dead bodies of their enemies and allies. But the case was otherwise with the household troops of the Emperor, the guards, grenadiers, and reserve cavalry. These superb corps had been kept by the Emperor throughout the whole three preceding campaigns in the highest state of discipline and equipment, and for this glorious *entrée* they decked themselves out with the utmost possible care. Incredible efforts were made by the men through the night, even after the fatigues of the preceding day, to gratify alike their sovereigns' and their own wishes on this memorable occasion. From having almost invariably, during the preceding campaign, marched and fought in their great-coats, their uniforms were in, their knapsacks, clean and dry, and their arms were burnished up with a vigour which soon rendered them as bright as when they left the esplanades of St Petersburg or Berlin.¹

¹ Dan. 381.
Lond. 254,
300.

Meanwhile the terms of the capitulation were the subject of anxious discussion in the Emperor's cabinet. It was conducted on the part of the French by Colonels Fabvier and Denis, on that of the Allies by Nesselrode and Orloff. To all the demands of the French marshals that Paris should be protected, its monuments intrusted to the care of the national guard, and private property preserved sacred, the Allies gave a ready consent; but a very serious difficulty arose, when it was proposed that the marshals with their followers should capitulate. To this they positively refused to accede, declaring that they would sooner perish in the streets; and as the Russian officers had no power to dispense with this material article, they were obliged to refer the matter to the Emperor, who agreed to abandon it. A discussion next arose as to the route by which the marshals should retire; the Allies insisting for that of Brittany, the French for any they might choose. This too was referred to the Emperor, who agreed to forego this condition also. The terms of the capitulation were at length finally adjusted

70.
Final conclusion of the capitulation.

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¹ Dan. 375,
377. Vict.
et Conq.
xxiii. 317,
318. Plotho,
iii. 418, 419.

71.
Interview of
Alexander with the ma-
gistrates of
Paris.

at three in the morning; it being stipulated that the marshals should evacuate Paris at seven on the same day; that the whole public arsenals and magazines should be surrendered in the state in which they were when the capitulation was concluded; that the national guard, according to the pleasure of the Allies, should be either disbanded or employed under their direction in the service of the city; that the wounded and stragglers found after ten in the morning should be considered prisoners of war; and that Paris should be recommended to the generosity of the Allied sovereigns.¹

The municipal magistrates of Paris, consisting of the two prefects of the department of the Seine, the mayor of the city, the chiefs of the national guard, and a few of its superior officers, thus abandoned to themselves, without any superior government to direct their movements, now deemed it high time to take steps for the preservation of the city. Accordingly a deputation, consisting of those elevated functionaries, set off at two in the morning for the headquarters of the Allied sovereigns. They had no need of lamps to their carriages; the immense semicircle of watchfires through which they passed on the road to Bondy threw a steady light on the road, and first revealed to them the vast force by which the capital had been assailed. Proceeding rapidly on, they soon reached the headquarters, and at four they were introduced to the Emperor Alexander. They were received by him in the most gracious manner—"Gentlemen!" said the Czar, "I am not the enemy of the French nation; I am so only of a single man, whom I once admired and *long loved*; but who, devoured by ambition and filled with bad faith, came into the heart of my dominions, and left me no alternative but to seek security for my future safety in the liberation of Europe. The Allied sovereigns have come here, neither to conquer nor to rule France, but to learn and support what France itself deems most suitable for its own welfare; and they only await, before undertaking the task, to ascertain, in the declared wish of Paris, the probable wish of France." He then promised to take under his especial protection, the museums, monuments, public institutions, and establishments of all sorts in the capital.² Upon the request of the magistrates that the

² Vict. et
Conq. xxiii.
319, 320.
Burgh. 249,
250. Koch,
iii. 517, 521.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
390, 394.

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national guard should be kept up, Alexander, turning to the chief of the staff, asked if he could rely upon that civic force. The reply was, that he might entirely rely upon their discharging every duty like men of honour. The Emperor immediately replied that he could expect nothing more, and desired no other guarantee; and that he referred the details to General Sacken, whom he had appointed governor of Paris, and whom they would find in every respect a man of delicacy and honour.

Paris, meanwhile, was in that state of combined excitement and stupor which prepares the way for great political revolutions. The terrors of the people had been extreme during the battle: they trembled for the pillage, massacre, and conflagration, which they were told by the placards posted by the police, awaited them if the Allies were successful; and they dreaded at least as much the unchaining the cupidity of the faubourgs and passions of the Revolution, by the proposal to arm the working classes, and prepare a national defence. While the struggle lasted, an immense crowd filled the Boulevards, and all the streets leading in to them on the north and east, composed of at least as many women as men, who manifested the utmost anxiety for the event, and evinced the warmest sympathy with the long files of wounded who were brought in from the heights. On the approach of evening, when the passage of artillery and ammunition waggons through the streets to the southward told but too plainly that the defence could no longer be maintained, the sentiment that Napoleon was overthrown, and that a change of government would take place, became universal. The partisans of a regency, under the direction of Marie Louise, who otherwise might have been numerous, were paralysed by her departure from the capital; and the Jacobins and republicans, long restrained under the empire, did not venture to declare themselves, from terror of the Allied arms. Thus the royalists, who had received some slight countenance at least from the Allied headquarters, were the only party which ventured to act openly; and already some symptoms of their taking a decided part had appeared.¹

72.
State of public feeling at Paris during this period.

¹ Beauch. ii. 225, 259.
Vict. et Conq. xxlii. 320, 321.
Lab. ii. 369.
Koch, iii. 521, 523.

At the barrier of Mousseaux, where a battalion of the

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73.

First move-
ments of the
royalists.

national guards was ordered by the general to issue forth and combat with the troops of the line, the Duke of Fitzjames, a known royalist leader, had stepped forward from the ranks, harangued the regiment, and persuaded them to disobey the order, upon the ground that it was contrary to the fundamental conditions of their institution to be sent beyond the barriers. After it was known that a capitulation had been agreed to, the activity of the royalist committee was redoubled. All night they were in deliberation: in vain several of their members were arrested by the police: the general conviction that the authority of that hated body, and their host of ten thousand spies, by whom Paris and France had so long been governed, would soon be at an end, counterbalanced all their efforts; and it was determined to raise the royalist standard openly in the capital on the following morning at nine o'clock. Accordingly, M. Charles de Vauvineux, on the Place Louis XV., read aloud to a small assembly of royalists Schwartzberg's proclamation, issued the day before, and at its close, mounting the white cockade, exclaimed "VIVE LE ROI!" The number of his followers was only four, but they immediately rode through the neighbouring streets and Boulevards, repeating the ancient rallying cry of France, and distributing white cockades to the people. A few gentlemen of the old families and the better classes joined them, but their numbers were still very inconsiderable; and towards the Porte St Martin and Rue St Antoine the royalist emissaries were insulted by the people and seized by the police. The great body of the inhabitants were congregated in the streets, and highly excited, but dubious and uncertain; anxious, but yet apprehensive: ready to receive an impulse, but incapable of originating it. Such is the end of revolutions.¹

In this state of agitation and uncertainty, noonday arrived, and the *cortège* of the Allied sovereigns began to make its appearance in the Faubourg St Martin, on their way to the capital. The Prussian cavalry of the guard, preceded by some squadrons of Cossacks, came first; then, the Prussian light horse of the guards; next the Austrian grenadiers; then the Russian and Prussian foot-guards: the Russian cuirassiers and artillery closed the procession.

¹ Lab. ii.
378, 381.
Beauch. ii.
257, 283.
Montg. vii.
400. Vict.
et Conq.
xxiii. 321.
Koch, iii.
525, 527.

74.
Entrance of
the Allied
sovereigns
into Paris.

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Indescribable was the enthusiasm which the matchless spectacle excited in the minds of the soldiers and officers who witnessed the march. Precisely at eight o'clock the Emperor mounted his horse, and traversing the vast array of soldiers who were drawn up to salute him in passing, arrived at nine at the commencement of the Faubourg St Martin. Already various pickets of Cossacks had traversed the Boulevards; the principal military points in the capital had been occupied by the Russians; the red Cossacks of the guard were to be seen at the corners of the principal streets; their bizarre costume and Asiatic physiognomy had excited general alarm. But when the superb array of the household troops appeared, when the infantry thirty, and the cavalry fifteen abreast, began to defile through the faubourg, and the forces whom they had so often been told were cut to pieces or destroyed, were beheld in endless succession, in the finest order and the most brilliant array, one universal feeling of enthusiasm seized upon the multitude.¹

¹ Dan. 384,
385. Burgh.
251. Beauch.
ii. 281, 283.
Lond. 301.
Cap. x. 467.
468. Die
Grosse
Chron. iv.
396, 397.

Every window was crowded; the roofs were covered with anxious spectators; the throng in the streets was so excessive that it was with difficulty the troops could make their way through them. Passing from the extreme of terror to that of gratitude, the Parisians gave vent in the loudest applause to their astonishment and admiration. The proclamation of the Allied sovereigns to the inhabitants of Paris, already given,* had been placarded in every part of the capital that morning; its conciliatory expressions were universally known, and had diffused a unanimous entrancement. The grand object of anxiety to all, was to get a glimpse of the Emperor Alexander, to whom, it was generally felt, their deliverance had been owing. When that noble prince, with the King of Prussia on his right, and Prince Schwartzemberg and Lord Cathcart on his left, made his appearance, amidst a brilliant suite of varied uniforms, at the Porte St Martin, the enthusiasm of the multitude knew no bounds. Cries of "Vive l'Empereur Alexandre!" "Vive le Roi de Prusse!" "Vivent les Alliés!" "Vivent nos Libérateurs!" burst from all sides;² and the universal transports resembled rather the incense of a grateful people to a

75.
Universal
transports
of the people.

² Cap. x.
467, 468.
Dan. 384,
386. Lond.
301, 302.
Burgh. 251.
252. Thib.
ix. 640.
Beauch. ii.
281, 284.

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxxviii. § 53, note.

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76.

Extraordi-
nary scene
in the Place
Louis XV.

beneficent and victorious sovereign, than the reception by the vanquished of their conqueror, after a bloody and desperate war.

Turning to the right at the Porte St Martin, the Allied sovereigns passed along the Boulevard of the same name, and admired at the gate of St Denis the noble triumphal arch, inscribed "Ludovico Magno." As they approached the Boulevard Italien, the aspect of the multitude, if possible still greater, was of a more elevated description: the magnificent hotels of that opulent quarter were crowded with elegantly dressed females, waving white handkerchiefs, and cries of "Vivent les Bourbons!" were heard in every direction. Such was the enthusiasm with which the sovereigns were received as they defiled through the Boulevard de la Madeleine, that the people kissed their boots, their sabres, and the trappings of their horses; and many young women of graceful exterior and polished manners, entreated the gentlemen in attendance to take them up before them on their horses, that they might obtain a nearer sight of their deliverers.* Alexander's manner was so gracious, his figure so noble, his answers so felicitous, his pronounciation of the French so pure, as to excite universal admiration. "We have been long expecting you," said one. "We should have been here sooner but for the bravery of your troops," was the happy answer of the Czar. "I come not," he repeatedly said, "as your enemy; regard me as your friend."¹

The sovereigns defiled past the then unfinished pillars of the Temple of Glory, now converted into the graceful peristyle of the church of the Madeleine; their triumphant hoofs rang in the Place Louis XV., on the spot where Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and the Princess

¹ Beauch. ii.
283. Dan. 384.
385. Burgh.
252. Cap. x.
467, 468.
Die Grosse
Chron. iv.
397.

* I have been assured of this fact by both Lord Cathcart and Lord Burghersh, now the Earl of Westmoreland, who took a part in the procession, and themselves had a fair Parisienne, sometimes *en croupe*, at others on the pommel of their saddles, at the place Louis XV. The English who entered Paris with the Allies were the Earl of Cathcart, Lord Stewart, Lord Burghersh, Sir Hudson Lowe, Colonel H. Cooke, the Hon. Major Frederick Cathcart, Captain Wood, Lieutenant Aubin, Lieutenant the Hon. George Cathcart, Lieutenant Harris, who brought the despatches to England, Thomas Sydenham, Esq., John Bidwell, Esq., and Dr Frank.—BURGHESH, 254, *Note*. Savary gives the same account of the Parisian ladies on this occasion. "There were to be seen ladies, and even ladies of rank, who so far forgot the respect due to themselves, as to give themselves up to the most shameful delirium. They threw themselves over the circle of horses which surrounded the Emperor of Russia, and testified an *empressement* more fitted to excite contempt than conciliate kindly feeling."—SAVARY, vii. 52.

Elizabeth had been executed; and halting in the entrance of the Champs-Élysées, they beheld fifty thousand of their chosen troops defile before them, amidst the applause of the multitude, and through the space formed by the bayonets of the national guard of Paris, which kept the ground for the procession. "God!" said Monvel, in the church of St Roch during the fervour of the Revolution, "if you exist, avenge your injured name: I bid you defiance: you dare not launch your thunders; who will after this believe in your existence?" * "Lento gradu, ad vindictam, Divina procedit ira; tarditatem supplicii gravitate compensat." † The thunders of Heaven had now been launched; the Revolution had been destroyed by the effect of its own principles, and the answer of God delivered on the spot where its greatest crimes had been committed, by the mouths of the Revolutionists themselves.¹

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77.
Striking
moral retri-
bution which
now fell on
Paris.

¹ Montg. vii.
400. Beauch.
ii. 283, 285.
Cap, x. 467,
468. Lond.
302. Dan.
384, 386.
Burgh. 252.
Duval, iv.
150.

" Par ce terrible exemple apprenez tous du moins
Que les crimes publics ont les dieux pour témoins;
Plus le coupable est grand, plus grand est le supplice.
Tremblez peuples et rois, et craignez leur justice!" ‡

* *Ante*, Chap. xiv. § 48.

† The Divine wrath proceeds by a slow step to retribution: it compensates the delay of punishment by its weight.—ST AUGUSTIN.

‡ VOLTAIRE, *Semiramis*, Act v. Scene 8.

CHAPTER LXXXIX.

RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS, AND CONCLUSION
OF THE WAR.—APRIL 1—JULY 30, 1814.CHAP.
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1814.

1.
Great diffi-
culty in the
choice of
Napoleon's
successor.

NAPOLEON was now overthrown: but a duty of no small difficulty awaited the Allied sovereigns in deliberating upon who was to be acknowledged as his successor. In truth, it was a question of the most delicate kind; and there was not a little danger that the alliance, which had been held together with such difficulty during the vicissitudes of war, would be broken up in determining what use they were to make of their victory. Not only political principles and passions of the most profound, but family interests of the strongest kind, were at issue in the determination that was about to be taken. It was of the last importance to avoid rendering the war a national one in France, and to continue to hold it out, as it in reality was directed, solely against the violence and injustice of the Revolution. But how was this to be done if a dynasty which they had proscribed, and which was possibly still unpopular, was forced upon an unwilling people? The Allied sovereigns had uniformly declared, that they would wait for some manifestation of public opinion in France, but none such had hitherto been generally evinced; and it would soon be necessary to take some decided measure while yet in uncertainty as to the race of sovereigns, or the species of government, which would be acceptable to its inhabitants. Nor were the inclinations of the Allied sovereigns less at variance on the subject. Alexander had more than once repudiated the idea of a crusade for the restoration of the Bourbon line; Austria naturally and openly inclined to a regency, of which Marie Louise

might be the head ; while, although the English ministers in private inclined to the ancient race, yet no official act implicating the nation had hitherto taken place ; and following the principles of their constitution, and the uniform principles of their government during the war, they too deprecated the idea of any forcible interference in the internal affairs of France.

When the review was concluded, and the troops were dividing into small parties to reach the quarters assigned them, in the barracks and suburbs of the city, Alexander alighted at the hotel of M. Talleyrand, where the leading members of the senate, and the most distinguished characters of the capital, were assembled. The fact of his taking up his residence there sufficiently evinced the part which the arch-diplomatist was to take in the negotiations which followed. The meeting was of a very various character, and exhibited a strange example of the manner in which the most opposite parties are thrown together in the later stages of a revolution. On the side of the royalists there were the Baron Louis and M. de Pradt, the well-known and acute Archbishop of Malines, the Duc de Dalberg, Bourrienne, formerly Napoleon's private secretary, and the senator Bournonville ; and these, with the King of Prussia, Prince Schwartzemberg, Prince Lichtenstein, Count Nesselrode, and Count Pozzo di Borgo, constituted this memorable assemblage. Their proceedings are well worth recounting ; the fate of the world depended upon their deliberations.¹

Alexander opened the discussion by stating that there were three courses to adopt : either to make peace with Napoleon, taking the necessary securities against him ; to establish a regency ; or to recall the house of Bourbon. Upon these momentous questions he requested the opinion of the meeting, protesting that the only wish of the Allied sovereigns was to consult the wishes of France, and secure the peace of the world. Talleyrand immediately rose, and strongly urged that the two former projects were altogether inadmissible ; and that there could be no peace in Europe while Napoleon, or any of his dynasty, were on the throne. He concluded that the only course was to adopt the third, which would be generally acceptable, and which offered the only way of escaping out of the

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1814.

2.
Important
meeting of
the sove-
reigns at
Talleyrand's
hotel.

¹ Thib. ix.
640, 641.
Cap. x. 469,
476. De
Pradt, Hist.
de la Restau-
ration, 13,
14.

3.
Account of
the delibera-
tion.

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¹ De Pradt,
Hist. de la
Restauration,
18, 24. Cap.
x. 476, 477.
Sav. vii. 53,
54.

evils by which they were surrounded. He added, under the mild rule of a race of princes who had learned wisdom in misfortune, all the guarantees which could be desired would be obtained for durable freedom. To this proposition it was replied by Schwartzemberg, that no indications of indifference to the Emperor had been witnessed by the army in its passage through France; that the declarations in favour of the Bourbons had been few and far between; and that the heroic resistance of the national guards at Fere-Champenoise, many of whom had been only a few days before at the plough, gave no indications of such a disposition. Alexander then turned to Talleyrand, and asked him how he proposed to arrive at his object. Talleyrand replied, by means of the constituted authorities: that he would answer for the senate, and that their example would be speedily followed by all France.¹

4.
Which terminates in the determination to restore the Bourbons.

Alexander then asked the Abbé de Pradt and Baron Louis their opinion; and prefaced it by declaring, in the most energetic terms; "that he was not the author of the war; that Napoleon had, without a cause, invaded his dominions; that it was neither a thirst for conquest nor the lust of dominion which had brought him to Paris, but the necessity of self-preservation; that he had done all in his power to spare that capital, and would have been inconsolable if he had failed in that object; finally, that he was not the enemy of France, but of Napoleon, and all who were hostile to its liberties." In these sentiments the King of Prussia and Prince Schwartzemberg expressed their entire concurrence; and then the Abbé de Pradt and Baron Louis declared that they were royalists; "that the great majority of the French nation were of the same opinion; that it was the knowledge of negotiations going on at Chatillon with Napoleon, that alone had hitherto prevented this opinion from manifesting itself; but that, now that they were concluded, Paris would readily declare itself, and the whole of France would immediately follow its example." "Sire," resumed Talleyrand, "there are but two courses open to us: Buonaparte or Louis XVIII. Buonaparte if you can—but you cannot; for you are not alone. What would they give you in his place? A soldier? We want no

more of them. If we wanted one, we would keep the one we already have : he is the first in the world. After him, any one that could be offered us would not have ten votes in his favour. I repeat it, Sire ! any attempt except for Buonaparte or Louis XVIII. is but an intrigue." "Well, then," said Alexander, "I declare that I will no longer treat with the Emperor Napoleon ;" and added, on the suggestion of the Abbé de Pradt, "nor with any member of his family."¹

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¹ De Pradt,
Hist. de la
Rest. 18, 24.
Sav. vii. 53,
55. Thib. ix.
640, 641.
Cap. x. 476,
477.

The die being thus cast, the next step to be taken was to announce the resolution of the Allied sovereigns to the inhabitants of Paris. An address to the French nation was immediately drawn up and published, in which they declared that they would grant more favourable terms to a wise government, than when it was necessary to provide against the devouring ambition of Napoleon : that they would not treat with Napoleon, nor any member of his family : that they would respect the integrity of France, as it had been under its legitimate monarchs : that they wished that France should be great and powerful, and would respect and guarantee any constitution which it might adopt : and concluded by inviting the senate to appoint a provisional government, and prepare a suitable constitution for the French people.* Orders were, at the same time, sent to the police to liberate all persons detained in prison for state offences, or "for having prevented the inhabitants in their communes from firing on the Allied troops, and so saved their persons and effects, or who were in detention on account of their attachment to their ancient and legiti-

5.
Declaration
of the Allies
that they
would no
longer treat
with Napol-
eon nor his
family.
March 30.

* "The Allied powers having occupied Paris, they are ready to receive the declaration of the French nation. They declare, that if it was indispensable that the conditions of peace should contain stronger guarantees when it was necessary to enchain the ambition of Napoleon, they would become more favourable when, by a return to a wiser government, France itself offers the assurance of repose. The Allied sovereigns declare, in consequence, that they will no longer treat with Napoleon nor with any of his family ; that they respect the integrity of old France, as it existed under its legitimate kings—they may even go further, for they always profess the principle, that for the happiness of Europe it is necessary that France should be great and powerful ; that they recognise and will guarantee such a constitution as the French nation may give itself. They invite, consequently, the senate to appoint a provisional government, which may provide for the necessities of administration, and establish such a constitution as may be fitting for the French people. The intentions which I have just expressed are common to me with all the Allied powers."—ALEXANDER, *Paris*, 31st March 1814. Three P.M. ; See CAPEFIGUE, x. 477 ; and THIBAUDEAU, ix. 642.

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LXXXIX.

1814.

¹ Hard. xii.
394, 395.
Cap. x. 476,
477. Thib. ix.
642, 643.
Bour. x. 43,
45.

mate sovereign." Some difficulty was anticipated in getting a printer who would have courage enough to throw off such a proclamation : but Talleyrand had early in the morning provided against this difficulty, and was ready with an artisan, who did the work with such expedition that before nine at night five hundred copies were placarded over every part of Paris. At the same time, Bourrienne, by means of the post-office, of which he got command by authority of Alexander, circulated it next morning over the whole of France.¹

6.
Immense effect of this declaration.

This declaration produced a prodigious impression. It cut short at once all intrigues for a regency, and, in fact, left the nation no alternative but to revert to the Bourbons. The senate, thus specially called upon by the Allied sovereigns to act, was not long in being put in motion : it had been secretly prepared in part for such a step by Talleyrand, and the declaration of the Allies at once brought matters to a crisis. Already the municipal council of Paris had, from the Hotel de Ville, issued a vehement invective against Napoleon, and in favour of Louis XVIII. ; but the senators were in great part uninitiated in the secret of the approaching change, and it was with pale visages and trembling steps that they obeyed the summons which, early on the morning of the 1st April, Talleyrand, in his capacity of arch-chancellor of the empire, sent them, to assemble to deliberate in their usual hall of assembly. Only sixty-four out of one hundred and forty attended ; but that number comprised several men of distinction, whose names had been known on almost every side through all the phases of the Revolution : many who had voted for the death of the king, and others who, by a kind of miracle, had kept their heads on their shoulders during the Reign of Terror. To the proceedings of that day are affixed the signatures of Destutt, Tracy, Fontanes, the eloquent orator of the empire, Garat, the Abbé Gregoire, Lambrecht, Lanjuinais, the Abbé de Montesquieu, Roger Ducos, Serrurier, Soules, and the Marshal Duc de Valmy ! Strange assemblage of men of the most opposite political sentiments, now met together to pull down the last government of the Revolution !²

² Moniteur,
April 1, 2,
and 3, 1814.

Talleyrand opened the proceedings ; and after a short

discussion, a provisional government was unanimously established, consisting of Talleyrand, who was president, the Comte de Bournonville, the Comte de Jaucourt, the Duc de Dalberg, and M. de Montesquieu. The latter had been a distinguished member of the Constituent Assembly in 1789. Nothing was said of Napoleon, though the very establishment of a provisional government was the most decided act of high treason to his authority ; nor of the Bourbons, though every step taken was a nearer approach to their recognition. The principal care of the senate appeared to be the formation of a constitution, and in that view it was provided that the senate and legislative body should be a constituent part of the new government ; their ranks and pensions should be preserved to the army, the public debts maintained, the sale of the national domains ratified, an amnesty declared for the past, liberty of worship and of the press established, and a constitution on these bases formed. The last act in the popular drama in France was worthy of all which had preceded it. No provision was made, excepting a word for the press, for public freedom or individual liberty : all that was thought of was the preservation of the *interests* created by the Revolution, and the first stipulation was in favour of these. Doubtless their preservation was an essential element in any restoration which was likely to be durable ; but what a picture does the *absence* of any other stipulations give of the principles on which the struggle had been maintained !¹

The meeting of the senate broke up at half-past nine ; and they proceeded to wait upon the Emperor Alexander. He received them in the most gracious manner. "Gentlemen," said he, "I am charmed to find myself in the midst of you. It is neither ambition nor the love of conquest which has led me hither ; my armies have only entered France to repel unjust aggression. Your Emperor carried war into the heart of my dominions when I wished only for peace. I am the friend of the French people ; I impute their faults to their chief alone ; I am here with the most friendly intentions ; I wish only to protect your deliberations. You are charged with one of the most honourable missions which generous men can discharge,—that of securing the happiness of a great people,

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1814.

7.

Establishment of a provisional government by the Senate. April 1.

¹ Séances, April 1. 1814. Moniteur, April 2, 1814 ; and Cap. x. 471 ; and Thib. ix. 647.

8.

Generous conduct of the Emperor Alexander, who liberates all the French prisoners.

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in giving France institutions at once strong and liberal, with which she cannot dispense in the state of civilisation which she has attained. I set out to-morrow to resume the command of the armies, and sustain the cause which you have embraced : it is time that blood should cease to flow ; too much has been shed already ; my heart grieves for it. I will not lay down my arms till I have secured the peace which has been the object of all my efforts ; and I shall be content if, in quitting your country, I bear with me the satisfaction of having had it in my power to be useful to you, and to contribute to the peace of the world. The provisional government has asked me this morning for the liberation of the French prisoners of war confined in Russia : I give it to the senate. Since they fell into my hands, I have done all in my power to soften their lot. I will immediately give orders for their return ; may they rejoin their families in peace, and enjoy the tranquillity which the new order of things is fitted to induce !” A hundred and fifty thousand men by these words recovered their liberty, and were to be restored to their families and their country. Such was the vengeance which Alexander took for the desolation of his dominions and the flames of Moscow ! When Napoleon left Vienna in 1809, he blew up the time-honoured bastions of the capital ;* when he became master of Berlin in 1806, he said, “I will make the Prussian nobility so poor, that they shall beg their bread ;”† when he evacuated Moscow, he gave orders for destroying the Kremlin, the last relic of that capital which had escaped the flames.‡ If ever the spirit of religion actuated the human breast, it was Alexander’s on that occasion.¹

¹ *Moniteur*,
April 3, 1814.
Cap. x. 478.
Beauch. ii.
326, 327.

On the day following, being April 2d, the senate by a solemn decree dethroned the Emperor, and absolved the army § and people from their oaths of allegiance. || This

* *Ante*, Chap. ix. § 44. † *Ib.* Chap. xlv. § 88. ‡ *Ib.* Chap. lxxiii. § 28.

§ “Soldiers ! France has broken the yoke beneath which she has groaned for so many years ! You have never fought save for your country : you can now no longer combat but against her, under the standards of the man who has hitherto conducted you. See what you have suffered from his tyranny : you were once a million of soldiers ; almost all have perished under the sword of the enemy ; or, without subsistence, without hospitals, they have been doomed to die of misery and famine. You are no longer the soldiers of Napoleon : the senate and people of entire France absolve you from your oaths.”—*Moniteur*, 5th April 1814.

|| “Frenchmen ! on emerging from civil dissension, you chose for chief a man

decisive step was moved in an impassioned speech by Lambrecht; the act of accusation having been prepared by Barbe-Marbois, Lanjuinais, and Fontanes. It abounded in the most severe and cutting invectives against the imperial government; in the justice of which posterity, from the evidence of facts, must almost entirely participate, and which involve the most valuable commentary that history has preserved on the inevitable tendency and final issue of revolutions. Nor is the lesson the less important, if we recollect that the body which now burst forth into this vehement strain of indignation against the Emperor, was the very senate which had so long been the passive instrument of his will; that the orators, whose eloquence was now so powerfully exerted to demonstrate the ruinous tendency of his administration, were the very men who had hitherto exalted it to the skies as the height of wisdom and magnanimity; and that the empire, whose exhaustion and miseries they now so graphically portrayed, was the powerful monarchy which they had formerly represented as regenerated by revolution, and conducted by the most splendid abilities to the summit of military glory. Either the statement they now made, and the picture they now drew, was true or false. If it was true, what a lesson does it read on the effect of that unrestrained indulgence of the social passions which constitutes a revolution; if it was false, what a mirror does it present of the baseness of character which such a convulsion produces, and the destiny of a state which it throws into the guidance of such hands!^{1*}

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9.
The Senate
dethrone
Napoleon.
April 2.

¹ *Moniteur*,
April 4,
1814; and
Cap. x. 481.
Thib. ix. 650,
651.

who appeared on the theatre of the world with an air of grandeur. You reposed in him all your hopes; these hopes have been deceived: on the ruins of anarchy he has founded only despotism. He was bound at least in gratitude to have become a Frenchman with you: he has not done so. He has never ceased to undertake, without end or motive, unjust wars, like an adventurer who is impelled by the thirst for glory. In a few years he has devoured at once your riches and your population. Every family is in mourning; all France groans: he is deaf to our calamities. Possibly he still dreams of his gigantic designs, even after unheard-of reverses have punished in so signal a manner the pride and the abuse of victory. He has shown himself not even capable of reigning for the interests of his despotism. He has destroyed all that he wished to create. He believed in no other power but that of force; force now overwhelms him—just retribution for insensate ambition!"—*CAPEFIGUE*, x. 483; and *Moniteur*, April 5, 1814.

* "The conservative senate, considering that, in a constitutional monarchy, the monarch exists only in virtue of a social compact: that Napoleon Buonaparte's administration for some time was firm and prudent, but that latterly he has violated his fundamental compact with the French people, especially by raising and levying taxes without the sanction of the law, in direct opposition to the oath which he took on ascending the throne: that he committed that

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10.
General
adherence
to the new
government.

The legislative body, in a meeting consisting of seventy-seven members, adhered to the act of the senate dethroning Napoleon, and absolving the army and nation from their oaths to his government. Adhesions speedily came in on all sides. A falling cause rarely finds faithful defenders; in a revolutionary state, where success is the god of idolatry—never. All the public bodies of Paris forthwith prepared addresses, vying with one another in invectives against Napoleon, as they had formerly exhausted all the powers of rhetoric in extolling the unparalleled blessings of his government. It was a realisation of the views, and even the language, of Malet, who had so nearly proved successful when the Emperor was in Russia; but with the additional invectives drawn from boundless calamities since incurred, and irresistible military support since obtained. As fast as the intelligence reached the provinces and provincial towns, they lost not an instant in proclaiming the downfall of the tyrant, and their cordial adhesion to the new order of things. Still not a word was said, at least by any of the constituted authorities, on the subject of a return to the Bourbon dynasty. On the contrary, the persons appointed by the provisional

infraction of the liberties of the people, when he had, without cause, prorogued the legislative, and suppressed as criminal a report of that body, thereby contesting its title and share in the national representation: that he has undertaken a series of wars of his own authority, in violation of the law, which declared that they should be proposed, discussed, and promulgated as laws: that he has illegally issued several decrees declaring the penalty of death, especially those of 3d March last; tending to establish as national a war which sprung only from his immediate ambition: that he has violated the laws of the constitution by his decrees on state prisons: that he has annihilated the responsibility of monarchs, confounded all powers, and destroyed the independence of the judiciary bodies: that he has trampled under foot the liberty of the press by means of a corrupt and enslaved censorship, and made use of that powerful instrument only to deluge France with false maxims, doctrines favourable to despotism, and outrages on foreign governments: that acts and reports of the senate itself have undergone alteration previous to publication: that instead of reigning conformably to the interest, happiness, and glory of the French nation, in terms of his oath, Napoleon has put the finishing stroke to the miseries of the country, by refusing to treat with the Allies on terms which the national interest required him to accept, and which did not compromise the honour of France: that by the abuse which he has made of the resources in men and money intrusted to him, he has effected the ruin of the towns, the depopulation of the country, and every where induced famine and contagious pestilence: considering, in fine, that by all these causes the imperial government *has ceased to exist*, and that the wishes of the French call for a state of things of which the first result may be the re-establishment of a general peace, and the reunion of France with all the states of the great European family,—the senate declares and decrees as follows:—1. Napoleon Buonaparte is cast down from the throne, and the right of succession in his family is abolished. 2. The French people and army are absolved from their oath of fidelity to him. 3. The present decree shall be transmitted to the departments and armies, and proclaimed immediately in all the quarters of the capital.”—*Moniteur*, 5th April 1814; and CAPEFIGUE, x. 479, 481.

government to the principal offices of state, were almost all drawn from the republican party. Dessolles, an austere democrat, was nominated to the command of the national guard; M. Angles to the police; Henriot de Pansey became minister of public justice; M. Beugnot, of the interior; Malouet, of the marine; M. Louis, of the finances; M. de Laforest, of foreign affairs; Dupont de Nemours was made secretary to the government; and the general, Dupont, minister of war. This last appointment, though made because they thought they were sure of the man, was unfortunate; it recalled to the army the disaster of Baylen, one of the darkest blots on their historic scutcheon. All the persons belonged more or less to the republican or imperial parties: not a royalist appeared amongst them. Therein Talleyrand showed his knowledge of human nature: the former could be gained only by their interests; of the latter he was sure through their affections.¹

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1814.

¹ *Moniteur*,
April 4,
1814; and
Cap. x. 482.

Nothing, however, had yet been heard from the army; and although its force, reduced now to fifty thousand men, could not pretend to cope with the colossal mass of a hundred and sixty thousand Allies, who, having been brought up from all the detachments in the rear, were now grouped around Paris; yet it had Napoleon at its head, and it was of the highest importance, both to the domestic settlement of France and the general peace of Europe, that its sentiments should as soon as possible be expressed. The world was not long kept in suspense. In the *Moniteur* of April 7, appeared an official correspondence between Prince Schwartzemberg and Marshal Marmont, commencing on the 3d, and which terminated in the adhesion of the marshal to the provisional government on the 4th. The stipulated conditions were, that the life and personal freedom of Napoleon should be secured, and a fitting asylum provided for him in some situation designated by the Allied powers; and that the French troops which, in virtue of the present convention, might pass over to the Allies, should be provided with secure quarters in Normandy, where they were to retire with their arms, cannon, and baggage. In consequence of this important step, the whole corps of Marmont, twelve thousand strong, immediately entered the Allied lines, where they were received with respect mingled with

11.
Defection of
Marmont.

April 5.

CHAP.
LXXXIX.

1814.

April 4.

¹ *Moniteur*,
April 4 and
7, 1814; and
Cap. x. 497,
501.12.
Caulain-
court's mis-
sion to Alex-
ander.

acclamations, and, passing through their files, took up their quarters at Versailles on their route for Normandy.* At the same time Barclay de Tolly issued a proclamation to the Russian troops, in which he declared that, peace being now restored between France and Russia, all enmity between them and the French inhabitants should forthwith cease, and they should reserve their hostility for the small body of unhappy warriors who still adhered to the fortunes of Napoleon.[†]

That body, however, was daily becoming more considerable: the fidelity of the Revolution could not withstand the storms of adverse fortune. Caulaincourt, despatched by Napoleon from the Trois Fontaines of Juvisy to endeavour to re-open a negotiation with the Allied powers, had great difficulty in making his way into Paris, as the barriers were in the hands of the Allied soldiers. He was on the point of turning back in despair, when, by accident, the carriage of the Grand-duke Constantine drove up, who, after much entreaty, agreed to put him in the way of seeing the Emperor, though without giving him the slightest reason to hope that any alteration of the determination already taken could be expected. This was on the evening of the 31st March. He was introduced into the palace of the Elysée Bourbon at ten at night, but the Emperor could not leave the conference of the Allied sovereigns, at which he assisted. The brilliant lights with which the palace was resplendent; the rapid

* "Soldiers! for three months the most glorious successes had crowned your efforts; neither perils, nor fatigues, nor privations, have been able to diminish your zeal, or cool your ardour for your country. Your country esteems and thanks you by my mouth, and will never forget what you have done. But the moment has now arrived when the war which you waged has become without end or object; it is time you should repose. You are the soldiers of your country; it is public opinion, therefore, which you are bound to follow; and it desires you to tear yourselves from dangers which are now without an object, to preserve the noble blood which you will know how again to shed should your country again call for your exertions. Good cantonments and my paternal cares will soon, I trust, make you forget the fatigues you have experienced."—MARMONT to his *Corps d'Armée*, 5th April 1814; *Moniteur*, 7th April 1814; and CAPEFIGUE, x. 500.

† "Soldiers! your perseverance and your valour have delivered the French nation from the yoke of a tyrant, who acted for himself alone, and forgot what he owed to an estimable and generous people. The French nation has declared for us; our cause has become theirs; and our magnanimous monarchs have promised them protection and support. From that moment the French became our friends. Let your arms destroy the inconsiderable band of unfortunate men who still adhere to the ambitious Napoleon; but let the cultivators and the peaceable inhabitants of towns be treated with consideration and friendship, like allies united by the same interests."—*Ordre du Jour*, par le COMTE BARCLAY DE TOLLY, Paris, 4th April 1814, *Moniteur* of 5th.

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entry and departure of carriages; the cheers of the Russian guards round the hotel; the prancing and neighing of steeds which drove up to the door; the busy concourse to and fro—reminded him of the days when, in that same palace, Napoleon had with him matured his gigantic plans for the conquest of Russia. What a contrast for the imperial plenipotentiary! Here, worn out with care, devoured with misery, steeped in grief, he awaited with breathless anxiety the approach of the Czar, who was to announce the decision of the Allied powers on his master's fate.¹

¹ Caul. i. 363, 374; and ii. 1, 12.

At length, at one in the morning, the Emperor appeared, and received him in the kindest manner; but gave no hopes of any modification of the resolution of the sovereigns. The utmost that he could get him to promise was, that on the day following, at the council, he would revert to the question of a regency; intimating, at the same time, that any further hope was inadmissible. At four the Emperor retired to rest; he reposed in the bed in which Napoleon formerly slept: Caulaincourt threw himself, in the antechamber, on a sofa on which that great man had in old times worked with his secretaries during the day. Unable to sleep, from the recollections with which he was distracted, he arose, and rested for some hours in an arm-chair: when day-light dawned in the morning, he found that it was the very chair on which Napoleon had usually sat, and which bore in all parts the deep indentations of his penknife.* The decision of the sovereigns was, at eleven, announced by Alexander in these words—"Return to the Emperor Napoleon; tell him faithfully all that has passed here, and as soon as possible come back with an abdication in favour of his son. The Emperor Napoleon shall be suitably treated, I give you my word of honour."²

13.
Which terminates in disappointment.

² Caul. i. 363, 380; and ii. 1, 19. Cap. x. 491, 493. Fain, 218, 219.

Caulaincourt arrived with this intelligence at Fontainebleau late on the night of the 2d April. Napoleon at once refused, in the most peremptory terms, to abdicate in favour of his son, and treated as altogether chimerical the idea of restoring the Bourbons in France; alleging that they were obnoxious to nine-tenths of the nation. "Re-establish the Bourbons in France! The madmen! They

14.
Napoleon at first refuses to abdicate. April 4.

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxviii. § 52.

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would not be there a year: they are an object of antipathy to nine-tenths of the nation. And how would the army, whose chiefs have combated the emigrants—how would they bear the change? No, no; my soldiers will never be theirs: it is the height of folly to think of founding an empire of such heterogeneous materials as theirs of necessity would be composed of. Can it ever be forgotten that they have lived twenty years on the charity of the stranger, at open war with the principles and interests of France? The Bourbons in France! it is absolute madness, and will bring down on the country a host of calamities. I was a new man, free of the blood which had stained the Revolution: I had nothing to avenge, every thing to reconstruct; but even I would never have ventured to seat myself on the vacant throne had not my forehead been crowned with laurels. The French nation have raised me on their bucklers, only because I have executed great and glorious deeds for it. But the Bourbons—what have they done for France? What part can they claim in its conquests, its glory, its prosperity? Re-established by the stranger, they must yield every thing to their masters; they must bend the knee to them at every turn. They may take advantage of the stupor occasioned by the occupation of the capital to proscribe me and my family; but to make the Bourbons reign in France!—never!”¹

¹ Caubl. ii. 48,
50.

15.
But at length
agrees to do
so in favour
of his son.

Full of the project of resuming hostilities, he mounted on horseback early on the morning of the 3d, and traversed the advanced posts along the whole line. The soldiers, despite their disasters, were full of enthusiasm, and demanded, with loud cries, to be led back to Paris;* and the *young* generals, who had their fortunes to make, shared the general ardour. But it was not thus with the old generals, or those whose fortunes were made. They surrounded Caulaincourt, eagerly demanding what had been

* “Soldiers!” said he, “the enemy has gained some marches upon us, and outstripped us at Paris. Some factiousmen, the emigrants whom I have pardoned, have mounted the white cockade, and surrounded the Emperor Alexander, and they would compel us to wear it. Since the Revolution, France has always been mistress of herself. I offered peace to the Allies, leaving France in its ancient limits, but they would not accept it. In a few days I will attack the enemy; I will force him to quit our capital. I rely on you—am I right? (Yes, yes.) Our cockade is tricolor; before abandoning it we will all perish on the soil of France. (Hurrah! yes, yes.)”—CAPEFIGUE, x. 496.

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done at Paris ; listened with undisguised complacency to his account of the first proceedings of the senate ; and it was evident, from their doubts and hesitation, either that they regarded the cause of the Revolution as hopeless, or that they had profited so much by its excesses that they were disposed to risk nothing more in its defence. The marshals were nearly unanimous on the subject ; Ney in particular was peculiarly vehement upon the impossibility of further maintaining the contest, and the absurdity of their sacrificing every thing for one man.* Orders were, nevertheless, given over night for the troops to prepare for a forward movement ; and measures were adopted for transferring the headquarters next day to Essonne, on the road to Paris. But, during the night, news arrived of the dethronement of the Emperor by the senate. It spread immediately through the army, and produced a great impression, especially on the marshals and older generals. The orders to advance to Paris were not recalled, but it was evident that they were not to be obeyed. At noon a conference of the Emperor with Berthier, Ney, Lefebvre, Oudinot, Macdonald, Maret, Caulaincourt, and Bertrand, took place, at the close of which Napoleon signed his abdication in favour of his son, and of the Empress as regent. Macdonald and Ney were forthwith despatched with Caulaincourt to present this conditional abdication to the Allied sovereigns.¹ †

¹ Fain, 218,
221. Caul. ii.
28, 37. Cap.
x. 492, 493.

While the three plenipotentiaries of Napoleon were on their way to Paris, the march of events at Fontainebleau was so rapid as almost to outstrip imagination. During the night of the 4th, intelligence arrived of the adhesion of Marmont to the provisional government, and the entrance of his *corps d'armée* within the Allied lines. At this news the indignation of the Emperor knew no bounds, and its vehemence found vent in an order of the

16.
Napoleon's
proclamation
against Mar-
mont and the
Senate.

* "Ney, in an especial manner, made himself remarkable by the vehemence of his expressions, as he had always done since Moscow. 'Are we,' said he, 'to sacrifice every thing to one man? Fortune, rank, honours, life itself? It is time to think a little of ourselves, our families, and our interests.' Caulaincourt warmly supported the plan of a regency, thinking it was all that could be done for Napoleon."—CAPEFIGUE, x. 492.

† "The Allied powers having proclaimed that the Emperor Napoleon is the sole obstacle to the re-establishment of peace in Europe,—the Emperor Napoleon, faithful to his oath, declares that he is ready to descend from the throne, to quit France, and even life itself, for the good of the country, inseparable from the rights of his son, of the regency of the Empress, and of the maintenance of the laws of the empire."—*Fontainebleau, April 4, 1814*; FAIN, 221.

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day next morning. "The Emperor," said he, "thanks the army for the attachment which it has manifested towards him, and chiefly because it has recognised the great principle that France is to be found in him, and not in the people of the capital. The soldier follows the fortune and the misfortune of his general; his honour is his religion. The Duke of Ragusa has not inspired his companions in arms with that sentiment: he has passed over to the Allies. The Emperor cannot approve the condition on which he has taken that step; he cannot accept life and liberty at the mercy of a subject. The senate has allowed itself to dispose of the government of France; it forgets that it owes to the Emperor the power which it has now abused—that it was he who saved a part of its members from the storms of the Revolution, drew it from obscurity, and protected it against the hatred of the nation. The senate founds on the articles of the constitution to overturn it, without adverting to the fact that, as the first branch of the state, it took part in those very acts. A sign from me was an order for the senate, which always did more than was desired of it. The senate does not blush to speak of the libels the Emperor has published against foreign nations; it forgets that they were drawn up by itself. As long as fortune was faithful to their sovereign, these men were faithful, and not a whisper was heard against the abuse of power. If the Emperor despised them, as they now reproach him with having done, the world will see whether or not he had reasons for his opinion. He held his dignity from God and the nation; they alone could deprive him of it. He always considered it as a burden; and when he accepted it, it was in the conviction that he alone was able to bear its weight. The happiness of France appeared to be indissolubly bound up with the fortunes of the Emperor: now that fortune has decided against him, the will of the nation alone can persuade him to remain on the throne. If he is really the only obstacle to peace, he willingly gives himself up a sacrifice to France."¹

¹ Fain, 225,
227. Cap. x.
505.

When Caulaincourt and Macdonald arrived at Paris, however, they found that matters had proceeded too far to render the proposition of a regency admissible. In fact, though the Emperor Alexander secretly inclined to

that course, and Austria, as might have been expected, was ready to support it; yet the declaration against Napoleon, and the manifestations in favour of the Bourbons, had been so vehement and unanimous from all incorporated bodies and all classes of society, that to establish the family of Napoleon now on the throne, would appear to be doing a violence to the national will. Nor did it escape observation, that the recognition of Marie Louise as regent, and the young Napoleon as heir, would in fact be a continuation of the revolutionary regime, attended with its passions, its ambition, and its dangers; and that the exclusion of Napoleon personally would be but nominal, as long as his family sat upon the throne, and the imperial authorities continued the government.* Influenced by these considerations, the Allied powers unanimously agreed that the sentence of dethronement pronounced by the senate could not be disturbed, and that they must adhere faithfully to their declaration, that they would not negotiate with Napoleon or any of his family. Caulaincourt and Macdonald exerted themselves to the utmost in the Emperor's behalf, but it was in vain; and Alexander announced the final decision in the mournful words—"It is too late." Ney was more flexible: feeble and irresolute in political life, as much as he was bold and undaunted in the field of battle, he was easily gained over to the party of Talleyrand; and next morning his formal adhesion to the provisional government appeared in the columns of the *Moniteur*.^{1†}

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17.

The mission of Caulaincourt to establish a regency fails.

¹ Thib. x. 21.
Fain, ii. 228,
230. Cap. x.
508, 509.
Caul. ii. 51,
57. Lond.
311.

In truth, during the four days which had elapsed since

* "A regency with the Empress and her son," said the Emperor Alexander, "sounds well, I admit; but Napoleon remains—there is the difficulty. In vain will he promise to remain quiet in the retreat which will be assigned to him. You know even better than I his devouring activity, his ambition. Some fine morning he will put himself at the head of the regency, or in its place: then the war will recommence, and all Europe will be on fire. The very dread of such an occurrence will oblige the Allies to keep their armies on foot, and thus frustrate all their intentions in making peace."—THIRBAUDEAU, x. 15.

† "Yesterday I came to Paris with the Duke of Vicenza and the Duke of Tarentum, furnished with full powers from the Emperor Napoleon to defend the interests of his dynasty on the throne. An unforeseen event having broken off the negotiations when they promised the happiest results, I saw that, to avoid a civil war to our beloved country, no course remained but to embrace the cause of our ancient kings; and, penetrated with this sentiment, I repaired that evening to the Emperor Napoleon to declare to him the wish of the French nation. The Emperor, aware of the critical situation to which he has reduced France, and of the impossibility of his saving it himself, appeared to resign himself to his fate, and has consented to an absolute resignation, without any restriction."—LE MARÉCHAL NEY. *Fontainebleau, 5th April 1814, half-past eleven at night; Moniteur, April 7.*

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18.

The cause of
the Restoration
had become irresistible
at Paris.

the first declaration of the Allies that they would not treat with Napoleon or any of his family, the cause of the Bourbons had been gained. The voice in their favour, which at first had emanated merely from the enthusiastic lips of a few devoted adherents, whose fidelity had survived all the storms of the Revolution, had now swelled into a mighty shout, so as to include not only the whole influential bodies, but nearly all the population of the capital. It was neither any chivalrous feeling of loyalty, nor any abstract repentance for the crimes of the Revolution, which produced this vehement desire. Selfishness was at the bottom of the public feeling. *Deliverance from evil* was the feeling of the multitude—preservation of their fortunes, the passion with the great. Even on the first day of the Allies' arrival, a crowd of persons, flying with characteristic vehemence from one extreme to another, had grossly insulted the busts and monuments of the Emperor, and a rope was slung up to his statue on the pillar in the Place Vendôme, with which they strove to pull it down. But the solidity of the fabric resisted all their efforts. When they could not succeed in throwing it down, the mob next covered the statue with a white sheet, so as to withdraw it from the view. "They did well," said Napoleon, "to conceal from me the sight of their baseness." By a decree of the senate on April 5, all the emblems and initials belonging to the imperial dynasty were ordered to be effaced from the public edifices and monuments in Paris; workmen were immediately engaged to carry this decree into execution, and their ingenuity generally contrived to turn the N into an H, for Henri IV., as quickly as the nation turned from the imperial to the royal dynasty. So great was the violence of public feeling against the monuments of the late Emperor, that Alexander, to prevent their total destruction, was obliged to issue a decree, taking them, and in an especial manner the pillar in the Place Vendôme, under his peculiar protection.^{1*}

April 5.

April 7.
¹ Moniteur,
April 5, and
7, 1814. Cap.
x. 492.

Such was the impulse communicated to the public funds by the prospect of a termination of the war, that

* "The monument on the Place Vendôme is under the especial safeguard of the magnanimity of the Emperor Alexander and his allies. The statue on its summit will not remain there; it will immediately be taken down, and give place to one of Peace."—*Proclamation, 7th April 1814; Moniteur.*

the five per cents, which on the 30th March were at forty-five, had risen in the next five days twenty-five per cent, so as to be quoted on the 5th April at seventy. Universal transports, similar to those which prevailed in England at the Restoration, seized upon the public mind ; it was like the joy of a shipwrecked mariner when he first beholds a friendly sail in the desolate main. In the midst of the general rapture, Chateaubriand's celebrated pamphlet, "*De Buonaparte et des Bourbons*," appeared ; and contributed, in the most powerful manner, to give a practical direction to general feeling, by pointing out with fervent, though exaggerated eloquence, the origin of the public evils, and the only mode of escape which yet remained open from these. Whatever might be said of the violence of this production, of which thirty thousand copies were sold in a few days, no reproach could be cast upon the consistency of the author ; for he had refused office under Napoleon on the death of the Duc d'Enghien, and braved his resentment in the plenitude of his power.* When Alexander and the King of Prussia appeared at the opera, on the 3d April, thunders of applause shook that splendid edifice. Every allusion to passing events was seized with avidity and encored with rapture. The splendid melodrama, the Triumph of Trajan, was brought forth with unequalled magnificence, and had a run of unprecedented success ; and a couplet, the production of a liberal writer, was sung and rapturously encored, which savoured rather of the servility of oriental despotism than of a nation which had so strenuously contested for liberty and equality.^{1†}

When the plenipotentiaries of Napoleon returned to Fontainebleau with this decided refusal, he burst out into a violent explosion of passion ; declared that it was too much ; that he would put himself at the head of his

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19.

Increasing
fervour in
favour of the
Bourbons.

¹ Cap. x. 508,
509. Personal
observation.
Thib. ix. 653,
655. Montg.
vii. 418, 419.

* *Ante*, Chap. xxxviii. § 25.

† The following couplets were added to the air of Henry IV., and sung at all the theatres amidst unbounded applause:—

"Vive Alexandre,
Vie à Roi des Rois ;
Sans nous donner des lois,
Ce prince auguste,
A le triple renom
De heros, de juste ;
Et nous rendre un Bourbon.

Vive Guillaume,
Et ces guerriers vaillans ;
De ce royaume
Il sauve les enfans,
Par sa victoire,
Et nous donne la paix ;
Et compte la gloire
Par ses nombreux bienfaits."

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20.

Napoleon's
final and un-
conditional
abdication.

armies, and rather run the hazard of any calamities than submit to a humiliation worse than them all. He called for his generals and maps, talked of retiring to the Loire, and spoke of the resources which still remained to him in the armies of Soult and Suchet. But during the night, he received the most decisive proof of the universal defection of his generals. All, with the exception of a few young, generous, and ardent men, represented the continuance of the war as impossible; and in fact, during the five days which had elapsed since the battle of Paris, the Allied forces had so accumulated both on his front and flanks, that retreat even had become out of the question. Still the iron soul of Napoleon refused to yield; and it was only after several painful altercations between him and his marshals that, with an agitated hand, and in almost illegible characters, he wrote and signed the absolute and unqualified resignation of the throne. "Observe," said he, when he affixed his signature, "it is with a conquering enemy that I treat, and not with the provisional government, in whom I see nothing but a set of factious traitors."¹*

¹ *Moniteur*,
April 12,
1814. *Cap.*
x. 515. *Fain*,
231, 232.
Caul. ii. 62,
68, 95.

21.

General and
base defection
from Napo-
leon.

And now commenced at Fontainebleau a scene of baseness never exceeded in any age of the world, and which forms an instructive commentary on the principles and practice of the Revolution. Let an eyewitness of these hideous tergiversations, an ardent supporter of the Revolution, record them; they would pass for incredible if drawn from any less exceptionable source. "Every hour," says Caulaincourt, "was after this marked by fresh voids in the Emperor's household. The universal object was how to get first to Paris. All the persons in office quitted their post without leave, or asking permission; one after another they all slipped away, totally forgetting him to whom they owed every thing, but who had no longer any thing to give. The universal complaint was, that his formal abdication was so long of appearing. 'It is high time,' it was said by every one, 'for all this to come to an

* "The Allied powers having declared that the Emperor Napoleon is the sole obstacle to the re-establishment of a general peace in Europe, the Emperor Napoleon, faithful to his oath, declares that he renounces, for himself and his heirs, the throne of France and Italy; and that there is no personal sacrifice, not even that of life itself, which he is not willing to make for the interests of France."—*Fontainebleau*, April 6, 1814; *Moniteur*, April 12, 1814; and *CAPEFIGUE*, x. 515.

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1814.

end ; it is absolute childishness to remain any longer in the antechambers of Fontainebleau, when favours are showering down at Paris ;' and with that they all set off for the capital. Such was their anxiety to hear of his abdication, that they pursued misfortune even into its last asylum ; and every time the door of the Emperor's cabinet opened, a crowd of heads were seen peeping in to gain the first hint of the much longed-for news." No sooner was the abdication and the treaty with the Allies signed, than the desertion was universal ; every person of note around the Emperor, with the single and honourable exceptions of Maret and Caulaincourt, abandoned him : the antechambers of the palace were literally deserted. Berthier even left his benefactor without bidding him adieu ! "He was born a courtier," said Napoleon, when he learned his departure : "you will see my vice-constable a mendicant for employment from the Bourbons. I feel mortified that men whom I have raised so high in the eyes of Europe should sink so low. What have they made of that halo of glory through which they have hitherto been seen by the stranger ? What must the sovereigns think of such a termination to all the glories of my reign !" ¹*

¹ Caul. ii. 68,
69, 99, 111.
Fain, 233,
235. Cap. x.
317, 318.

Nothing remained now but to conclude the formal treaty between Napoleon and the Allied powers ; and it was signed on the 11th April. By it Napoleon renounced the empire of France and the kingdom of Italy for himself and his descendants ; but he was to retain the title of Emperor, and his mother, brothers, sisters, nephews, and nieces, those of princes and princesses of his family. The island of Elba having been selected by him as his place of residence, it was erected into a principality in his favour : the duchy of Parma and Placentia was secured to the Empress Marie Louise and the prince her son, in full sovereignty : two million five hundred thousand francs

22.
Treaty be-
tween Na-
poleon and
the Allied
powers.

* In the general scramble, Constant, the Emperor's private valet, who had served him faithfully for fourteen years, took the opportunity to secrete one hundred thousand francs with which he had been intrusted, and which he buried in the forest of Fontainebleau. The fraud was detected the night before the Emperor set out for Elba, and the money given up by Constant, from the place where he had secreted it. He set off immediately for Paris, accompanied by Rustan, the Mameluke, who had been the Emperor's constant companion ever since he returned from Egypt. What is very remarkable, Constant details all these facts himself, giving them of course the best colouring he could.—See CONSTANT'S *Memoirs*, vi. 101, 112 ; and FAIN, ii. 150.

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(£100,000) a-year was provided for the annual income of the Emperor Napoleon, to be reserved from the revenue of the countries he ceded; and two millions more inscribed on the great book of France, to descend after his decease to his heirs—the first being a provision for himself, the second for his family: the Ex-Empress Josephine was to receive a million of francs yearly (£40,000) from the great book of France. All the moveable estate of the princes and princesses of the Emperor's family was to remain with themselves; but the furniture of the palace and diamonds of the crown were to revert to France. Fifteen hundred of the Old Guard were to escort the Emperor to his place of embarkation; and he was to be at liberty to take with him four hundred soldiers to form his body-guard. Finally, the Poles in the service of France were to be at liberty to return to their own country, with their arms and baggage. The treaty bore the signatures of Caulaincourt, Macdonald, Ney, Metternich, Nesselrode,* and Hardenberg.¹ To this treaty Lord Castlereagh, on the

¹ See the Treaty in Martens, Sup. i. 696, 700; and Cap. x. 518, 519.

* Charles Albert, Count of Nesselrode, was born at Lisbon in 1770. His father, who was descended of an ancient and noble family of German extraction, was plenipotentiary in that capital to Catherine II. Empress of Russia. Early destined to the diplomatic line by the choice of his father, and the rapid discernment of rising talent which distinguishes the cabinet of St Petersburg, Nesselrode made his first *entrée* into public life as an *attaché* to the French embassy at Paris in 1801, when Napoleon was First Consul. He little thought, amidst the succession of reviews, fêtes, and pageants, which then surrounded the throne of the victorious general, that he was destined to sign, in the very same capital, the treaty which told of his overthrow! His remarkable abilities and vast erudition, which were remarked even at that early age, soon, however, occasioned his transfer to the inner chancery, or private council, of the Russian empire. The Emperor Alexander early appreciated the importance of his services, and accordingly he accompanied that prince on his important interview with Napoleon at Erfurth, in 1808. From this period he became, as it were, the head of a middle body in Russian diplomacy, equally removed from the ardent patriotism of the old national party, which beheld with undisguised pain the subjection of the cabinet of St Petersburg to the dominion of Napoleon, and the ambitious dreams of the Greek enthusiasts, who aimed at planting the cross on the dome of St Sophia. Moderate and rational in his views, with extensive knowledge and great address, he soon became indispensable to Alexander—whose views he divined, whose character he studied, to whose interests he was devoted. In 1812, though not as yet the head of the imperial chancery, he had the chief direction of its foreign diplomacy. He was present at the interview at Abo between Alexander and Bernadotte. In 1813 his influence openly appeared: he accompanied the Emperor to Germany in the memorable campaign of that year, and signed the convention of Reichenbach with England on the 15th June 1813. He had a great share in the delicate negotiation which, in the succeeding months, led to the accession of Austria to the grand alliance, and ultimately occasioned the fall of Napoleon; and bore an active part, when military measures were resumed, in the difficult task of keeping Bernadotte to his diplomatic engagements. He signed, with the other plenipotentiaries of the Allies, the treaty of Chaumont, and subsequently that of Paris in the French capital. Since that time he has been almost the Metternich of Russian foreign affairs, and continued to enjoy the entire confidence of the Emperor.—See CAPEFIGUE, *Diplomates Européens*, ii. 317, 345; *Biog. des Hommes Vivans*, iv. 539, 540.

part of England, acceded, "but only to be binding upon his Britannic Majesty with respect to his own acts, but not with respect to the acts of third parties." *

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A terrible catastrophe had well-nigh terminated at this period the life and the sufferings of Napoleon. His departure for Elba had been fixed for the 20th April; and in the interim, while he was totally deserted by all but a few domestics and his faithful guards, it became evident to those around him, that some absorbing idea had taken possession of his mind. He recurred constantly to the last moments of departed greatness; his conversation to his intimate friends was entirely upon the illustrious men of antiquity, who, in circumstances similar to his own, had fallen by their own hands; in the close of his career as in its outset, he dwelt on the heroes of Plutarch, and their resolution not to survive misfortune. The apprehensions of his attendants were increased when they learned that on the 12th, the day after the signature of the treaty, he had directed the Empress Marie Louise, who was on her way from Blois to join him, to delay the execution of her design. On taking leave of Caulaincourt that night, after a mournful reverie he said, "My resolution is taken: we must end: I feel it." Caulaincourt had not been many hours in bed when he was suddenly roused by Constant, the Emperor's valet, who entreated him to come quickly, for Napoleon was in convulsions, and fast dying. He instantly ran in; Bertrand and Maret were already there; but nothing was to be heard but stifled groans from the bed of the Emperor. Soon, however, his domestic surgeon Ivan, who had so long attended him in his campaigns, appeared in the utmost consternation, and stated that he had been seen, shortly after going to bed, to rise quietly, pour a liquid into a glass, and lie down again; and Ivan had recognised in the phial, which was left on the table, a subtle poison, a composition of opium and other deadly substances, prepared by Cabanis, the celebrated physician, which he had given the Emperor during

23.
Abortive
attempt of
Napoleon to
poison him-
self.

* Lord Castlereagh's objections to the treaty were twofold. 1st, That it recognised the title of Napoleon as Emperor of France, which England had never yet done, directly or indirectly. 2d, That it assigned him a residence, in independent sovereignty, close to the Italian coast, and within a few days' sail of France, while the fires of the revolutionary volcano were yet unextinguished in both countries. The result proved that he had judged rightly.—See BEAUCHAMP, ii. 384.

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¹ Month.
Captivité de
St Helene,
ii. 39. Caul.
ii. 85, 89.
Fain, 241,
243. Con-
stant, vi. 85,
90.

24.
Universal
desertion of
the Empress,
and disper-
sion of Na-
poleon's fa-
mily.

the Moscow retreat, at his own desire, and which, as long as the danger lasted, he had constantly worn round his neck. When Caulaincourt seized his hand it was already cold. "Caulaincourt," said he, opening his eyes, "I am about to die. I recommend to you my wife and my son—defend my memory; I could no longer endure life. The desertion of my old companions in arms had broken my heart." The poison, however, either from having been so long kept, or some other cause, had lost its original efficacy; violent vomiting gave him relief; he was with great difficulty prevailed on to drink warm water; and after a mortal agony of two hours, the spasms gradually subsided, and he fell asleep. "Ivan," said he, on awaking, "the dose was not strong enough—God did not will it;" and he rose, pale and haggard, but composed, and seemed now to resign himself with equanimity to his future fate.¹*

Meanwhile the imperial court at Blois, where the Empress Marie Louise and the King of Rome had been since the taking of Paris, was the scene of selfishness more marked, desertions more shameless, than even the saloon of Fontainebleau. Unrestrained by the presence of the Emperor, the egotism and cupidity of the courtiers there appeared in hideous nakedness, and the fumes of the Revolution expired amidst the universal baseness of its followers. No sooner was the abdication of the Emperor known, than all her court abandoned the Empress; it was a general race who should get first to Paris, to share in the favours of the new dynasty. Such was the desertion that, in getting into her carriage on the 9th April, at Blois, to take the road to Orleans, no one remained to hand the Empress in but her chamberlain. The Empress, the King of Rome, were forgotten: the grand object of all was to get away, and to carry with

* There can be no doubt now of the accuracy of the preceding account, for Napoleon himself gave precisely the same account of the matter to Montholon at St Helena:—"Depuis," said he, "la retraite de Moscow, Je portais sur moi du poison suspendu au cou dans un cachet de soie: c'est Ivan qui l'avait préparé par mon ordre dans la crainte d'être enlevé par les Cosaques. A présent (à Fontainebleau) ma vie n'appartenait plus à la patrie: les événements des derniers jours m'en avaient rendu le maître. Pourquoi tant souffrir? Je n'hésitais pas, Je sautais à bas de mon lit, et délayant le poison dans un peu d'eau, Je le bus avec une sorte de bonheur. Mais le temps lui avait oté sa valeur. D'atroces douleurs m'arrachaient quelques gémissemens; ils furent entendus; des secours m'arriverent; Dieu ne voulut que Je mourussé encore; St Helene était dans ma destinée."—MONTHOLON, *Captivité de Napoleon*, ii. 37.

them as much as possible of the public treasure, which had been brought from Paris with the government. In a few days it had all disappeared. At Orleans, the remaining members of the Emperor's family also departed: Madame, Napoleon's mother, and her brother, the Cardinal Fesch, set out for Rome; Prince Louis, the ex-king of Holland, for Switzerland; Joseph and Jerome soon after followed in the same direction. The Empress at first declared her resolution to join Napoleon, maintaining that there was her post, and that she would share his fortunes in adversity as she had done in prosperity. The wretched sycophants, however, who were still about her person, spared no pains to alienate her from the Emperor. They represented that he had espoused her only from policy; that she had never possessed his affections; that during the short period they had been married he had had a dozen mistresses;* and that she could now expect nothing but reproaches and bad usage from him. Overcome partly by these insinuations, and partly by her own facility of character and habits of submission, she, too, followed the general example. Her French guards were dismissed, and replaced by Cossacks; she took the road from Orleans to Rambouillet, where she was visited successively by the Emperor her father, and the Emperor Alexander; and at length she yielded to their united entreaties, and agreed to abandon Napoleon. A few days after, she set out for Vienna, taking the King of Rome with her, and neither ever saw Napoleon more.¹

Amidst the general and humiliating scene of baseness which disgraced the French functionaries at the fall of Napoleon, it is consolatory, for the honour of human nature, to have some instances of a contrary character to recount. Carnot remained faithful at his post at Antwerp till the abdication of Napoleon was officially intimated; and then he announced his adhesion to the new government in an order of the day to the garrison, in which he

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1814.

April 18 and
23.
1 Sav. vii.
115, 119. 156,
157. Thib. x.
33, 34.

25.
Honourable
fidelity of a
few at Fon-
tainbleau.
April 15.

* There was too much foundation for this scandal. Though women had no lasting power over Napoleon, and never in the slightest degree influenced his conduct, he was extremely amorous in his disposition, so far as the senses were concerned; and his infidelities, though carefully conducted to avoid observation, were very frequent, both before and after his marriage with Marie Louise. Two instances, in particular, are mentioned by Constant, which occurred at St Cloud recently before this period; and, what was very remarkable, both the ladies, one of whom was of rank, came to visit him at Fontainebleau during the mournful scenes which passed, though neither saw him on that occasion. Both afterwards visited him at Elba.—CONSTANT'S *Mémoires de Napoléon*, vi. 92-97.

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concluded with the memorable words, which comprise so much of a soldier's duty—"The armed force is essentially obedient; it acts, but never deliberates." Soult was one of the last to give in: his adhesion is dated Castelnau-dery, April 19, nine days after the battle of Toulouse,* and when, in reality, there was no alternative, as the whole nation had unequivocally declared itself. Of the few who remained faithful to the Emperor at Fontainebleau, it is impossible to speak in terms of too high admiration. Caulaincourt, after having nobly discharged to the very last his duties to his old master, at his earnest request returned to Paris, a few days before he departed for Elba, and bore with him an autograph letter from Napoleon to Louis XVIII., strongly recommending him to the service of the restored monarch. The Emperor obviously thought, and justly, that his presence there was indispensable to watch over the performance of the treaty of Fontainebleau. Generals Bertrand, Drouot, and Cambronne, Maret, General Belliard, Baron Fain, General Gourgaud, Colonel Anatole, Montesquieu, Baron De la Place, Generals Kosakowski and Vonsowitch, remained with him to the last at Fontainebleau; and Bertrand shared his exile, as well at Elba as at St Helena. Macdonald, though the last of his marshals to be taken into favour, was faithful to his duty: he did not forget his word pledged on the field of Wagram.† Napoleon was so sensible of his fidelity, that on the morning when he brought him the ratification of the treaty of Fontainebleau to sign, he publicly thanked him for his affectionate zeal, and lamented the coldness which had at one period estranged them from each other.¹ He had derived one benefit from his misfortunes—he had learned who were his real and who his false friends.‡ "At least," said the Emperor, "you will not refuse one souvenir—it is the sabre of Mourad-Bey, which I have often worn in

¹ Mém. sur Carnot, 280. Thib. x. 27, 29. Moniteur, April 21. Caul. ii. 114, 125.

* "Essentially obedient, the army has nothing now to do but to conform to the will of the nation."—SOULT's *Proclamation, Castelnau-dery, 19th April 1814*; *Moniteur*, 24th April; and BEAUCHAMP, ii. 501.

† *Ante*, Chap. lix. § 59.

‡ L'unico ben, ma grande,
Che riman fra' disastri agl' infelici,
E il distinguer da' finti i veri amici.
Oh del tuo Re, nou della sua fortuna,
Fido seguace! E perchè mai del regno,
Ond'io possa premiarti, il Ciel mi priva?

METASTASIO, *Alessandro*, Act ii. scene 1.

battle ; keep it for my sake. Return to Paris, and serve the Bourbons as faithfully as you have served me." Amidst the general and hideous defection of the other marshals,* it is refreshing to find one man who preserved unscathed, amidst the revolutionary furnace, the honour and fidelity of his Scottish ancestors, which had so long bound the Highlanders, more steadily even in adverse than in prosperous fortune, to the house of Stuart.

The last scene of this mighty drama was not unworthy of the dignity of those which had preceded it. When the day for setting out drew nigh, Napoleon in the first instance refused to move, and even threatened to renew the war, alleging that the Allied powers had broken the compact with him, by not permitting the Empress Marie Louise and his son to accompany him. Upon the solemn assurance of General Koller, the Austrian commissioner, that the absence of the Empress was of her own free will, he agreed to take his leave. The preparations for his departure were at length completed, and the four commissioners, on the part of the Allied sovereigns, who were to accompany him, appointed—viz. General Koller on the part of Austria, General Schouvaloff on that of Russia, Colonel Campbell on that of England, and Count Waldburg-Truchess on behalf of Prussia. The Emperor then at noonday descended the great stair of the palace of Fontainebleau, and, after passing the array of carriages which awaited him at the door, advanced into the middle of the Old Guard, which stood drawn up to receive him. Amidst breathless silence and tearful eyes he thus addressed them :—"Soldiers of my Old Guard, I bid you adieu ! During twenty years I have ever found you in the path of honour and of glory. In the last days, as in those of our prosperity, you have never ceased to be models of bravery and fidelity. With such men as you, our cause could never have been lost ; but the contest was interminable : it would have become a civil war, and France

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26.
The Emperor's last
speech at
Fontaine-
bleau.
April 24.

* Augereau, at Valence, on the Rhone, thus addressed his soldiers :—"Soldiers ! the Senate, the just interpreter of the national will, worn out with the despotism of Buonaparte, has pronounced, on the 2d April, the dethronement of him and his family. A new dynasty, strong and liberal, descended from our ancient kings, will replace Buonaparte and his despotism. Soldiers ! you are absolved from your oaths ; you are so by the nation, in which the sovereignty resides ; you are still more so, were it necessary, by the abdication of a man who, after having sacrificed millions to his cruel ambition, has not known how to die as a soldier."—AUGEREAU, 16th April ; *Moniteur*, 23d April 1814.

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must daily have become more unhappy. I have therefore sacrificed all our interests to those of our country. I depart ; but you remain to serve France. Its happiness was my only thought ; it will always be the object of my wishes. Lament not my lot : if I have consented to survive myself, it was that I might contribute to your glory. I am about to write the great deeds we have done together. Adieu, my children ! I would I could press you all to my heart ; but I will, at least, press your eagle." At these words General Petit advanced with the eagle ; Napoleon received the general in his arms, and kissed the standard. His emotion now almost overcame him ; but making a great effort, he regained his firmness, and said, " Adieu, once again, my old companions ! May this last embrace penetrate your hearts ! " With these words he tore himself from the arms of those around him, and threw himself into his carriage, which immediately drove off amidst the sobs and tears of his faithful Guard, all of whom had petitioned to be allowed to accompany him. Certainly never was a great career more nobly terminated.¹*

¹ Fain, 250,
252. Thib.
x. 46, 47.

27.

Napoleon's
journey to
Frejus, and
dangers
which he
ran.

Napoleon ere long, however, received convincing evidence, that how ardent soever might be the attachment of his soldiers, the population of all France was far from sharing the same sentiments. On the road to Lyons, indeed, he was received always with respect, generally with acclamations ; but after passing that city, which he traversed on the night of the 23d, he began to experience the fickleness of mankind, and received bitter proofs of the baseness of human nature, as well as the general indignation which his oppressive government had produced. At noon on the following day he accidentally met Augereau on the road near Valence : both alighted from their carriages, and, ignorant of the atrocious proclamation in which that marshal had so recently announced

* Voltaire would seem to have had a presentiment of this impressive scene in *Œdipe*, in the noble lines :—

" Finissez vos regrets et retenez vos larmes ;
Vous plaînez mon exit, il a pour moi des charmes ;
Ma fuite à vos malheurs assure un prompt secours ;
En perdant votre roi, vous conservez vos jours.
Du sort de tout ce peuple il est temps que j'ordonne,
J'ai sauvé cette empire en arrivant au trône,
J'en descendrai du moins comme je suis monté ;
Ma gloire me suivra dans mon adversité :
Mon destin fut toujours de vous rendre la vie."

Œdipe, Act v. scene 2.

his conversion to the cause of the Bourbons,* the Emperor embraced him, and they walked together on the road for a quarter of an hour in the most amicable manner. It was observed, however, that Augereau kept his helmet on his head as he walked along. A few minutes after, the Emperor entered Valence, and beheld the proclamation placarded on the walls: he then saw what recollection his lieutenant had retained of the days of Castiglione. The troops were drawn out to receive him, and they saluted the Emperor as he passed; but they all bore the white cockade. At Orange loud cries of "Vive le Roi!" were heard; and at Avignon he found his statues overturned, and the public effervescence against his government assuming the most menacing character.¹

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¹ Thib. x.
45, 47. Sir
Neill Camp-
bell's MS.
Cap. i. 31,
32. Botr.
x. 227, 230.

As Napoleon continued his journey to the south, the tumult became so excessive, that his life was more than once in imminent danger from the fury of the populace. At Orgon he was with difficulty extricated, chiefly by the firmness and intrepidity of Colonel Campbell and the other Allied commissioners, who acted with equal courage and judgment, from a violent death. At the inn of La Calade, near Saint Canat, a furious mob surrounded the house for some hours, demanding his head; and it was only by getting out by a back window, and riding the next post disguised as a courier, with the white cockade on his breast, that he escaped. Such was the mortification which Napoleon felt at this cruel reception from the people whom he had so long governed, that when the Allied commissioners came up to the post-house, they found him in a back room, with his elbows on his knees and his hands on his forehead, in profound affliction. Relays were provided outside the walls at Aix, to avoid the danger of entering the city; he was clothed in the Austrian uniform, which he wore during the remainder of his journey; and the under-prefect, Dupeloux, a man of courage and honour, escorted him in person on horseback as far as the limits of his department. At Luc, Napoleon met and had an affecting interview with Pauline, who, amidst all her vanities, had some elevated points of character; on the 27th, he reached Frejus; and on the 28th, at eight at night, set sail for Elba, on board the

28.
His narrow
escape at Or-
gon and
Saint Canat.

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxxix. § 25, note.

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English frigate the Undaunted, sent there to receive him. Thus, in its last stage, a British vessel bore Cæsar and his fortunes. He was received by Captain Usher, who commanded that vessel, agreeably to the orders of government, with the honours due to a crowned head: a royal salute was fired as he stepped on board, the yards were manned, and every possible respect was shown to him, from the captain to the humblest cabin-boy. Such was the impression produced by this reception from his enemies, so different from that of his own subjects which he had recently experienced, that he burst into tears. During the voyage he was cheerful and affable; conversed much with Captain Usher and the other officers on board; and was particularly inquisitive concerning the details of the English naval discipline—the object, he said, of his long admiration. A slight shade of melancholy was observed to pass over his countenance while the vessel was in sight of the Maritime Alps, the scene of his early triumphs; but he soon regained his usual serenity, and had, with his wonderful ascendancy over mankind, made great progress in the affections of the crew, when the vessel cast anchor in Porto-Ferraio, the capital of Elba.¹

Josephine did not long survive the fall of the hero with whose marvellous fortunes her own seemed in a mysterious manner to be linked. In her retreat at Navarre, she had wept in secret the declining fortune and tarnished glory of the husband who had elevated her to the pinnacle of worldly grandeur, and whose star had visibly become obscured from the moment that he divorced her from his side. He married misfortune, like Louis XVI., when he allied himself with the Austrian line.* Alexander was desirous to see and console her amidst her misfortunes, and promise his powerful protection to her children. At his request she came to Malmaison, the much-loved scene of the early and romantic attachment of Napoleon, and there the Emperor saw her frequently, and gave her

¹ Thib. x. 47,
48. Sir Neil
Campbell's
MS. Cap.
Cent Jours,
i. 32, 33.
Lab. ii. 452,
453. Jour-
nal du Comte
Valdbourg,
27. Bour. x.
227, 235.

29.
Death of
Josephine.
May 28.

* How applicable to Napoleon's fate were the words which Lucan makes the shade of Junia, Pompey's first wife, address to him in a dream:—

“Conjuge me, lætos duxisti, Magne, triumphos;
Fortuna est mutata toris: semperque potentes
Detrahère in cladem fato damnata maritos,
Innupsit tepido pellex Cornelia busto.”

LUCAN, *Pharsalia*, iii. 20.

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those assurances in the most unreserved manner. In the midst of these cares, however, she was suddenly taken ill of a putrid sore throat, which proved fatal at the end of a few days. The Emperor Alexander was with her almost to the last, and soothed her deathbed by reiterated assurances of protection to her children. And well and faithfully did he keep his promise. When some delay took place in making out the letters-patent, erecting the forests around Saint Leu into an appanage in favour of the second son of Queen Hortense, her grandson, as had been stipulated in the treaty of Paris, he declared that his guards should not leave Paris till they were signed, which induced its being immediately done. In the following year he took Prince Eugene's interests under his especial protection at the congress at Vienna, and was mainly instrumental in there putting them on a proper footing. The friendship thus contracted between the Viceroy and the Czar led to a prolongation of the intimacy in the next generation; and by a remarkable revolution in the wheel of fortune, Eugene Beauharnais' son, the Duke of Leuchtenberg, espoused in subsequent times one of the grand-duchesses, a daughter of the Emperor Nicholas; so that it is not altogether beyond the bounds of possibility, that a lineal descendant of Josephine, and a descendant by marriage of Napoleon, may one day mount the throne of Russia.¹

¹ Thib. x.
115, 117.
Beauch, iii.
37, 42.
Bour. x. 212,
216.

ALEXANDER, Emperor of Russia, who took so prominent a part in these memorable events, is one of the sovereigns of modern times who has left the greatest name in history, and who has made the most indelible marks on the records of European fame. The vast extension which the Russian empire has received under his rule, the burning of Moscow, and dreadful overthrow of the French army in 1812—the deliverance of Germany, and fall of Napoleon, have conspired to give a character of awful and yet entrancing interest to his reign, to which there is perhaps nothing comparable in the whole annals of mankind. He was born in 1777, and ascended the throne on the murder of the Emperor Paul in 1800, so that he was at this period only thirty-seven years of age. His character, naturally amiable and benevolent, had been moulded by the precepts of his enlightened, though speculative and visionary, Swiss preceptor, La Harpe. But the ideas of

30.
Character of
the Emperor
Alexander.

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that distinguished philanthropist were formed upon the dreams of the closet rather than a practical acquaintance with men, and this defect strongly appeared when Alexander was first called to act in the great theatre of public life. His early measures were all beneficent in their tendency, and bespoke a warm and susceptible heart; but he was not at first a match for the talent and the wickedness of the Revolution; and he yielded at Tilsit, less to the force of the French arms, than to the irresistible ascendant and magic sway of the great enchanter who wielded its powers.

31.
He became
great in mis-
fortune.

But if he was born good, he became great. He learned wisdom and gathered strength in the school of misfortune. If he had yielded at first, perhaps too easily, to the fascination of Napoleon's genius, no one ever surpassed him in the firmness with which, when again driven to arms, he resisted his aggression, or the tenacity with which he followed up the contest, till he had hurled his enemy from the throne. His early friendship for Napoleon was an affair of the heart; and he who has surrendered his heart, and been deceived, will be deceived no more. But for his firmness and resolution, the coalition would repeatedly have fallen to pieces. From the day Napoleon crossed the Niemen, Alexander clearly saw that peace with him was impossible. With Roman magnanimity, he held the same language when his empire was reeking with the slaughter of Borodino, and his star seemed to pale before the conflagration of Moscow, as when, on the heights of Chaumont, he gave law to a conquered world: and if he has been outshone by few conquerors in the lustre of his victories, or the magnitude of his conquests, none have equalled him in the magnanimous use which he made of his power, and the surpassing clemency with which in the moment of triumph he restrained the uplifted arm of vengeance.

32.
His private
character and
disposition.

In private life his conduct was less irreproachable. Unhappy circumstances, and the usual vices of royal life, had early produced an estrangement between him and the Empress, who nevertheless continued to reside in the imperial palace, where she preserved a spotless reputation. But though external decorum was thus preserved, and they were frequently in company together, they never

met in private ; and this at once deprived the empire of the hope of a direct succession to the throne, and threw the Emperor into the usual temptations of female fascination. He had frequent *liaisons* accordingly, but they partook of the benevolent and tender character of his mind, and were unattended by open licentiousness or indecorum. He was fond of praise, and often led into extremes by that weakness ; but it was the praise only of generous or noble deeds which he coveted. His figure was tall and majestic, his countenance open, his air mild, but such as at once bespoke the sovereign. He possessed the mingled dignity and serenity of aspect which poetic genius has ascribed to Jupiter Tonans.* No one possessed greater personal courage, or more passionately desired the honours of war ; but still a sense of duty to Europe led him to forego the command, which he might have obtained, of the Allied armies in Germany in 1813. His manners were polished and fascinating in the highest degree, his tastes refined and elegant, and his information surprising, considering the incessant avocations which the management of such weighty concerns required. Though passionately fond of accomplished female society, he was deeply impressed with the responsibility of his situation at the head of such an empire, and ever ready to forego its charms, and abandon all the luxuries of the court, to execute justice or stimulate improvement in the remotest parts of his dominions. A profound master, like most of his nation, of dissimulation, he was yet jealous of his personal honour ; and whatever he promised on his word, might with confidence be relied on, how much soever he thought himself entitled to elude the wiles of inferior diplomatists.

He was ambitious ; but his thirst for acquisition of territory was so blended with a desire for, and generally followed by an increase of, the happiness of mankind,

* “ — Dagli occhi, ch' etade ancor non muta,
 Spira l' ardire e 'l suo vigor primiero :
 E ben da ciascun atto è sostenuta
 La maestà degli anni e dell' Impero.
 Appelle forse o Fidia in tal sembiante
 Giove formò, ma Giove allor tonante.”

Gerus. Liber. xvii. 11.

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33.

His ambition,
and character
as a sovereign.

that it could hardly be called a fault. Deeply impressed with religious feelings, those noble sentiments breathed forth in all his addresses to his people and army throughout the whole course of the war, and influenced his conduct to the latest hour of his life. He regarded himself as an instrument in the hand of the Almighty for the destruction of the Revolution and the improvement of mankind, and acted through all his career, sometimes with imprudent haste, under that impression. His character cannot be better illustrated in this respect than by the fact, that he refused to permit his statue to be placed on the summit of the column which the gratitude of his country decreed to him at St Petersburg, but instead, he caused it to be surmounted by one of Religion extending her arms to bless mankind. Serenity and benevolence formed the leading features of his mind: no one more readily overlooked a fault, or forgave an injury; none was so uniformly devoted to the happiness of his people. But his empire was not ripe for the mighty projects of amelioration which he contemplated; mankind were too selfish and corrupt to follow out his wishes. He was perpetually grieved by discovering how all his philanthropic intentions had been marred by the cupidity or neglect of inferior agents, and how uniformly human wickedness had fastened on the best-conceived plans of social improvement. His very generosity at Paris, the liberal sentiments he there uttered, which entranced the world, were in advance of the people whom he governed, and brought on a dark conspiracy in his own dominions, which embittered his future days, and in the end shortened his life. He died of the malaria fever, at Taganrog, in the south of Russia, on the 31st November 1825, in the arms of the Empress Elizabeth, to whom he had for some time before his death become reconciled. He retained his faculties to the last, had the Scriptures frequently read to him during his previous illness, and left the theatre of his worldly greatness with the serenity which might have been expected from such a character. Inferior to Napoleon in genius, he was his superior in magnanimity: both conquered the world; but Alexander only could conquer himself.¹ Posterity will certainly award the first place to

¹ Caul. ii.
237. Cap. x.
347. Allen's
Life and Cor-
resp. ii. 406.
Biog. Univ.
Sup. lvi. 190,
(Alexandre.)

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the matchless genius of the French Emperor; but it will confirm the saying of that great man, extorted from him even in the moment of his fall,—“If I were not Napoleon, I would be Alexander.”*

34.
Character of
Talleyrand.
His early
history.

Never was character more opposite to that of the Russian autocrat than that of his great coadjutor in the pacification and settlement of Europe, PRINCE TALLEYRAND. This most remarkable man was born at Paris in 1754, so that in 1814 he was already sixty years of age. He was descended of an old family, and had for his maternal aunt the celebrated Princess of Ursins, who played so important a part in the War of the Succession at the court of Philip V. Being destined for the church, he early entered the seminary of St Sulpice; and, even there, was remarkable for the delicate vein of sarcasm, nice discrimination, and keen penetration, for which he afterwards became so distinguished in life. At the age of twenty-six he was appointed agent-general for the clergy, and in that capacity his administrative talents were so conspicuous that they procured for him the situation of Bishop of Autun, which he held in 1789, when the Revolution broke out. So well known had his talents become at this period that Mirabeau, in his secret correspondence with Berlin, pointed him out as one of the most eminent men of the age. He was elected representative of the clergy of his diocese for the Constituent Assembly, and was one of the first of that rank in the church who voted on the 29th May for the junction of the ecclesiastical body with the Tiers Etat. He also took the lead in all the measures, then so popular, which had for their object to despoil the church, and apply its possessions to the service of the state. Accordingly, he himself proposed the suppression of tithes, and the application of the property of the church to the public treasury. In all these measures he was deaf to the

* The following letter, written by the Empress of Russia to her mother the day after her husband's death, will show how entirely the bonds of conjugal affection had been reunited before the Emperor's death:—"I have lost all: the angel is no more. Dead, he smiles upon me as he was wont to do while living. There now remains no hope to me but in you, my dear mother, with whom I wish to come and weep, and to be present at the interment. I shall remain near the deceased, and follow him as fast as my strength will permit."—*Empress ELIZABETH to her Mother, Dec. 1, 1825; WHEELER'S Memoirs.*

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35.
Ruling prin-
ciples in life.

remonstrances of the clergy whom he represented, and already he had severed all the cords which bound him to the church.

His ruling principle was not any peculiar enmity to religion, but a fixed determination to adhere to the dominant party, whatever it was, whether in church or state; to watch closely the signs of the times, and throw in his lot with that section of the community which appeared likely to gain the superiority. In February 1790 he was appointed president of the Assembly; and from that time forward, down to its dissolution, he took a leading part in all its measures. He was not, however, an orator: knowledge of men and prophetic sagacity were his great qualifications. Generally silent in the hall of debate, he soon gained the lead in the council of deliberation or committee of management. He officiated as constitutional bishop, to the great scandal of the more orthodox clergy, in the great fête on the 14th July 1790, in the Champ de Mars, of which an account has already been given;* but he had already become fearful of the excesses of the popular party, and was perhaps the only person to whom Mirabeau, on his deathbed, communicated his secret views and designs for the restoration of the French monarchy. Early in 1792 he set out on a secret mission from the French government to London, where he remained till the breaking out of the war in February 1793, and enjoyed much of the confidence of Mr Pitt. He naturally enough became an object of jealousy to both parties; being denounced by the Jacobins as an emissary of the court, and by the royalists as an agent of the Jacobins. In consequence he was accused and condemned in his absence, and only escaped death by withdrawing to America, where he remained till 1795, engaged in commercial pursuits. It was not the least proof of his address and sagacity that he thus avoided equally the crimes and the dangers of the Reign of Terror, and returned to Paris at the close of that year with his head on his shoulders, and without deadly hostility to any party in his heart.

His influence and abilities soon caused themselves to

* *Ante*, Chap. vi. § 46.

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36.

His appointment as minister of foreign affairs.

be felt. The sentence of death which had been recorded against him in absence was recalled ; he became a leading member of the Club of Salm, which, in 1797, was established to counterbalance the efforts of the royalists in the Club of Clichy ; and on the triumph of the Revolutionists by the violence of Augereau in July 1797, he was appointed minister of foreign affairs. Nevertheless, aware of the imbecility of the Directorial government, he entered warmly into the views of Napoleon, upon his return from Egypt, for its overthrow. He was again made minister of foreign affairs by that youthful conqueror, after the 18th Brumaire, and continued, with some few interruptions, to be the soul of all foreign negotiations, and the chief director of foreign policy, down to the measures directed against Spain in 1807. On that occasion, however, his wonted sagacity did not desert him : he openly disapproved of the attack on the Peninsula, and was, in consequence, dismissed from office, which he did not again hold till he was appointed chief of the provisional government on 1st April 1814. He had thus the singular address, though a leading character under both *régimes*, to extricate himself both from the crimes of the Revolution and the misfortunes of the Empire.

37.

His great abilities.

He was no ordinary man who could accomplish so great a prodigy, and yet retain such influence as to step as it were by common consent, into the principal direction of affairs on the overthrow of Napoleon. His power of doing so depended not merely on his great talents : they alone, if unaccompanied by other qualifications, would inevitably have brought him to the guillotine under the first government, or the prisons of state under the last. It was his extraordinary power of divining the future course of events, the versatility and flexibility of his disposition, and the readiness with which he accommodated himself to every change of government and dynasty which he thought likely to be permanent, that mainly contributed to this extraordinary result. Such was his address, that though the most changeable character in the whole Revolution, he contrived never to lose either influence or reputation by all his tergiversations ; but, on the

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contrary, went on constantly rising, to the close of his career, when above eighty years of age, in weight, fortune, and consideration. The very fact of his having survived, both in person and influence, so many changes of government, which had proved fatal to almost all his contemporaries, of itself constituted a colossal reputation. Men never ceased admiring an address which could have so long obtained the mastery of the mutations of fortune; and when he said, with a sarcastic smile, on taking the oath of fidelity to Louis Philippe in 1830, "C'est le treisième," the expression, repeated from one end of Europe to the other, produced a greater admiration for his address than indignation at his perfidy.

38.
And profound
dissimula-
tion.

He has been well described as the person in existence who had the least hand in producing, and the greatest power of profiting by, revolutions. He was not destitute of original thought, but wholly without the generous feeling, the self-forgetfulness, which prompt the great in character, as well as talent, to bring forth their conceptions in word or action, at whatever hazard to themselves or their fortunes. His object always was not to direct, but to observe and guide the current: he never opposed it when he saw it was irresistible, nor braved its dangers where it threatened to be perilous; but quietly withdrew till an opportunity occurred, by the destruction alike of its supporters and its opponents, to obtain its direction. In this respect his talents very closely resembled those of Metternich, of whom a character has already been drawn;* but he was less consistent than the wary Austrian diplomatist, and though equalled by him in dissimulation, he was far his superior in perfidy. It cost him nothing to contradict his words and violate his oaths, whenever it suited his interest to do so; and the extraordinary and almost unbroken success of his career affords, as well as that of Napoleon, the most striking confirmation of the profound saying of Johnson—that no man ever raised himself from a private station to the supreme direction of affairs in whom great abilities were not combined with certain meannesses, which would have proved altogether

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxix. § 70.

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fatal to him in ordinary life. Yet was he without any of the great vices of the Revolution. His selfishness was constant, his cupidity unbounded, his hands often sullied by gold ; but he was not cruel or unforgiving in his disposition, and few, if any, deeds of blood stain his memory. His witticisms and bon-mots were admirable, and repeated from one end of Europe to the other. Yet was his reputation in this respect perhaps greater than the reality ; for, by common consent, every good saying at Paris, during his lifetime, was ascribed to the ex-bishop of Autun. But none perhaps more clearly reveals his character, and explains his success in life, than the celebrated one, of which he at least obtained the credit, "That the principal object of language was to conceal thought."

On Easter day, being April 10, a grand and imposing ceremony was performed in the Place Louis XV. On the spot where Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, the Princess Elizabeth, and so many of the noble victims of the Revolution had perished, a great altar was erected, by command of the Emperor Alexander, in order to a general thanksgiving, by the sovereigns and armies, for the signal and complete success with which it had pleased the Almighty to bless the Allied arms. There was something to the thoughtful mind inexpressibly impressive in this ceremony. Bareheaded, around the altar, the sovereigns, with their princes, marshals, and generals, partook in the service, which was celebrated with extraordinary pomp, according to the forms of the Greek church, by the bishops and priests of that establishment who had accompanied the Russian army. But it was, in the most emphatic sense, a *catholic* service. All Christendom was there represented ; the uniforms of twenty victorious nations were to be seen round the altar : it was a thanksgiving for the triumph of Christianity over the most inveterate, the most depraved, and the most powerful of its enemies. It bore none of the marks of worldly exultation ; the deliverance of mankind was ascribed with reverent humility to the arm of Omnipotence. On their knees, around the altar, the monarchs kissed the sacred emblem of the cross ; when it was elevated, all

39.
Solemn
thanksgiving
in the Place
Louis XV.
April 10.

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assembled bowed their heads with reverent devotion ; and a hundred guns, from the two banks of the Seine, announced the triumph of the gospel by the devotion which it had inspired into the breasts of its supporters. Such was the impression produced by the august scene, that not an arm was moved, nor a sound to be heard, in the vast concourse of thirty thousand soldiers, who stood in close column in the square. The whole marshals of France, in full uniform, attended the ceremony. The world never beheld such an example of moral retribution, such a convincing proof of the reality of the Divine administration. The rudest Cossack present felt the sacred influence. But no feelings of that sort were experienced, save in a few breasts, by the immense numbers of French who witnessed the ceremony. They were dead to its moral import ; they felt not its awful warning ; and consoled themselves for the presence of so many foreign uniforms in the heart of their capital by the observation, that the “ dresses were not so well made as those of their own army.”¹

¹ Dan. 403.
404. Bour-
x. 180, 181.
Lab. ii. 435,
436. Moni-
teur, April
12, 1814.
Thib. x. 24,
25.

40.
Louis
XVIII. is
called to the
throne.

April 7.

Nothing remained but to give effect to the declared will, alike of the sovereigns and the French people, by recalling the Bourbons. Hitherto, although all believed that the old family would be restored, yet no act clearly expressive of that intention had emanated from the provisional government, and they had, on the contrary, carefully disclaimed several acts of individuals, tending to the restoration of the royal authority. Doubts, in consequence, began to be entertained as to what was to be done, and the royalists were in general and undisguised uneasiness. But the resolution of the Allies was finally taken in the sitting, which continued till seven in the morning, of the night between the 5th and 6th, not to treat with a regency. Talleyrand then threw off the mask, and the conservative senate, by a solemn decree, called Louis XVIII. to the throne, and his heirs, according to the established order of succession previous to the Revolution. Various provisions were at the same time made for the establishment of the senate and legislative body, and the due limitations of the royal authority, which were afterwards engrossed in the charter, and

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formed the basis of the government of the Restoration. Suffice it to say at present, that the French received a constitution which gave them a hundred times more real freedom than they had ever enjoyed since the revolt of the 10th August had overturned the throne, and incomparably more than, as the event proved, they were capable of bearing. And so completely had the people repented of their dreams of self-government, and so wofully had they suffered from its effects, that this important decree, which thus re-established, after a lapse of twenty-one years, the royal family upon the throne, attracted very little attention, and was received by the whole multitude as a matter of course. Even the Abbé Sièyes voted for the King's return: he had now felt what the government of the masses was, and got an answer to his celebrated question, which twenty-five years before had convulsed France, "What is the Tiers Etat?"¹

¹ Moniteur, April 7, 1814. Beauch. il. 390, 394. Thib. x. 19, 21. Lond. 309. Burgh. 306.

The royal authority being thus re-established, the different branches of government rapidly fell into the new system. On the 9th the national guard assumed the white cockade, and on the 12th the Comte d'Artois, who during these great events had been drawing near to the capital, made his public entry into Paris. He was on horseback, surrounded by a brilliant *cortège* of gentlemen who had gone out to meet him, and near the barrier of Pantin was met by the marshals of France, in full costume, with Ney at their head. "Mon Seigneur," said Marshal Ney, speaking for himself and his brethren in arms, "we have served with zeal a government which commanded us in the name of France: your Highness and his Majesty will see with what fidelity we shall serve our legitimate king." "Messieurs," replied the Comte d'Artois, "you have made the French arms illustrious; you have carried, even into countries the most remote, the glory of the French name: the King claims your exploits: what has ennobled France can never be foreign to him." The procession, which swelled immensely as it advanced, proceeded to Notre Dame, where the prince returned thanks for his restoration to his country. "There is nothing changed," said he, "only a Frenchman the more in Paris. This is the first day of happiness I have experienced for twenty-five years."²

41.
Entry of the Comte d'Artois into Paris.

² Beauch. il. 407, 415. Burgh. 307. Lab. il. 437, 438.

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42.

Entry
of Louis
XVIII. into
London.
April 20.

Louis XVIII. was not long of responding to the call made upon him by the Senate. On the 20th April, the fugitive monarch left his peaceable retreat of Hartwell to be again tossed on the stormy sea of public affairs, and made his entry amidst an extraordinary concourse of spectators into London, where he was received in state by the Prince-Regent. No words can convey an adequate idea of the enthusiasm which prevailed on this occasion. It was a great national triumph, unmixed by one circumstance of alloy : it gave demonstration strong of the total overthrow of the revolutionary system. Sympathy with an illustrious race, long weighed down by misfortune, was mingled with exultation at the glorious reward now obtained for a quarter of a century of toils and dangers. White cockades were universal ; the general rapture was shared alike by the rich and the poor ; the fierce divisions, the rancorous faction, with which the war commenced, had disappeared in one tumultuous swell of universal exultation. "Sire," said the monarch with emotion to the Prince-Regent, when he first addressed him, "I shall always consider that, under God, I owe my restoration to your Royal Highness." The Prince-Regent received his illustrious guest with that dignified courtesy for which he was so celebrated, accompanied the royal family to Dover, and bade them farewell at the extremity of the pier of that place. In a beautiful day, and with the utmost splendour, the royal squadron, under the command of the Duke of Clarence, accompanied the illustrious exiles to their own country. Hardly had the thunder of artillery from the castle of Dover ceased to ring in their ears, when the cliffs of France exhibited a continued blaze, and the roar of cannon on every projecting point, from Calais to Boulogne, announced the arrival of the monarch in the kingdom of his forefathers.¹

April 27.

¹ Cap. Cent
Jours, i. 7,
10. Ann.
Reg. 1814.
Chronicle,
34, 36.
Beauch. ii.
509, 515.
Lab. ii. 473,
474.

43.
And into Pa-
ris, May 3.

Hitherto the progress of the sovereign had been a continued triumph ; but as he advanced through France, although the crowds which were every where assembled on the wayside to see him pass received him always with respect, sometimes with enthusiasm, yet it was apparent that there was a mixed feeling on the part of the people. The unanimous transports which had greeted his entry into London, and passage through England, were no

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longer to be discerned. The feeling of loyalty, one of the noblest passions which can fill the breast, because one of the least selfish, was nearly extinct in the great mass of the people: the return of the royal family was associated with circumstances of deep national humiliation: the principal feeling in the multitude was curiosity to see the strangers. The King arrived at Compiègne on the 29th, and the preparations for his reception at Paris having been completed, he made his public entry by the gate of St Denis on the 3d May, in the midst of a prodigious concourse of spectators. The Duchesse d'Angoulême was seated by his side: the Old Guard of Napoleon formed his escort: the national guard of Paris kept the streets for the procession; and innumerable officers and privates of the Allied armies added, by their gay and varied uniforms, to the splendour of the scene. The procession proceeded first to Notre Dame, where the King and the royal family returned thanks for their restoration, and then advanced by the quays and the Pont Neuf to the Tuileries. When the Duchesse d'Angoulême reached the foot of the principal stair of that palace, which she had not seen since the 10th August 1792, when, in company with Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, she left it to take refuge from the insurgents in the National Assembly,* her emotions were so overpowering that she fell down insensible at the King's feet. But these awful recollections produced little or no effect on the Parisians; and the principal observation made was, that the King's and Princess's dresses were cut in the London fashion, and that the Duchesse d'Angoulême was a perfect fright with her low English bonnet.[†]

¹ Cap. Hist. de la Restauration, 1. Beauch. ii. 517, 533. Bour. x. 239, 242. Lab. ii. 479, 480. Moniteur, May 4, 1814. Thib. x. 92.

But a more serious duty awaited the restored monarch: and having now resumed the reins of government, the first care which awaited him was the difficult task of concluding a treaty of peace with the Allied powers, which should at once satisfy their just and inevitable

* *Ante*, Chap. vii. § 98.

† At this period the English fashion for bonnets was exceedingly low, and the French proportionally high; so that the contrast between the Duchesse d'Angoulême's haymaker's bonnet and the splendid *coiffures* and feathers with which the ladies were adorned at Paris, was sufficiently striking. When Louis crossed the Pont Neuf, the veil was taken off the statue of Henry IV., which had been placed there a week before, and which bore the inscription—"Ludovico reduce, Henricus redivivus," which was the felicitous thought of M. Lally Tollendal.—*Personal Observation*.

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44.
Convention
of April 23d
for the aban-
donment by
France of
all her con-
quests.

¹ Hard. xii.
422, 423.
Lab. ii. 483.
484. Sav. vi.
174, 175.

45.
Prodigious
extent of the
possessions
thus ceded
by France.

² Schoell, x.
442. Mar-
tens, N. Re-
cueil, i. 706.

demands, and not prove an insuperable stumblingblock in the first days of his restoration to the French people. The generous, perhaps in some degree imprudent, expressions of the Emperor Alexander, at the first taking of Paris, had produced a prodigious impression; his popularity was at the highest point, and his influence in the capital altogether irresistible. It was the idea that they would escape by his magnanimity from the consequences of defeat, and retain, even after the occupation of the capital, no inconsiderable portion of their conquests, which had reconciled its inhabitants to the Restoration, and produced the general burst in favour of the Bourbon dynasty. But when the diplomatists began coolly to sit down to reduce the conditions of the treaty to writing, it was no easy matter to reconcile these expectations with the obvious necessity of curtailing France so much, that it should not again prove dangerous to the liberties of Europe; and it required all the address of Talleyrand, and the other ministers who had been appointed by the King, to overcome the difficulty.¹

By a convention concluded on 23d April, it was provided that the French troops in Germany, Italy, and the Low Countries, should cede all the fortresses and countries beyond the frontiers of old France, as they stood on the 1st January 1792, which was at one blow to sweep away the whole conquests of the Revolution. The Allied troops were, with as little delay as possible, to evacuate the whole of the territory so defined; and all military exactions on both sides were, by a secret article, to cease forthwith. The principal object of this clause was to put a stop to the unbounded and scourging requisitions of Marshal Davoust, who still retained possession of Hamburg. The number of strong places, and the quantity of artillery, warlike stores, and muniments of war, which by this convention fell into the hands of the Allies, was prodigious, and altogether unexampled in the annals of military trophies. They alone convey a stupendous idea of the vast extent of the military resources which, at one period, were at the disposal of the French Emperor;² and of the strange and ruinous policy which prompted him to disperse his troops over so many distant strongholds, when he was contending against greatly superior forces of

the enemy, for life and death, on the plains of Champagne.

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46.

Fortresses which she abandoned, and vast amount of their garrisons.

Hamburg, Magdeburg, and Wesel, in Germany ; Maestricht, Mayence, Luxembourg, and Kehl, on the Rhine and the Meuse ; Flushing, Bergen-op-Zoom, Antwerp, Ostend, Nieuport, and many others in the Low Countries ; Mantua, Alessandria, Peschiera, Gavi, and Turin, in Italy ; Barcelona, Figueras, Rosas, and Tortosa, in Spain, besides a vast number of others of lesser note, were abandoned. Fifty-three fortresses of note, twelve thousand pieces of cannon, ammunition and military stores in immense quantities, and garrisons to the amount of nearly a hundred thousand men,* all beyond the frontiers of old France, were thus at one blow surrendered ! What a picture does this present of the astonishing strength and tenacity of the grasp which Napoleon had laid on Europe ; of the greatness of the military giant whose weight had so long oppressed the world, when even in his last extremity, and after such unheard-of reverses, he yet had such magnificent spoils to yield up to the victor ! But what is physical strength where moral virtue is wanting ; and what the external resources of an empire, when its heart is paralysed by the selfishness of a revolution ? ¹

¹ Koch, iii. 667, 669. Schoell, x. 442, 445. Martens, N. Recueil, i. 706.

The treaty of the 30th May was signed at Paris by the plenipotentiaries of France on the one side, and Great Britain, Russia, and Prussia, on the other ; but after the convention of 23d April, it contained little which was not foreseen by the French. It provided that France should be reduced to its original limits, as they stood on

47.

Treaty of May 30th at Paris.

* The magnitude of these garrisons, even in the last moments of the empire, and when Napoleon was literally crushed at Paris for want of men, was such as almost to exceed belief. The following was the amount of a few of the principal, as they finally evacuated the fortresses they held on the conclusion of hostilities :—

	Garrisons.	Surrendered.
Hamburg, . . .	12,200	25th May.
Magdeburg, . . .	16,000	25th May.
Wesel, . . .	10,000	10th May.
Mayence, . . .	15,000	4th May.
Barcelona, . . .	6,000	12th May.
Antwerp, . . .	17,500	6th May.
Mantua, . . .	6,000	28th April.
Alessandria, . . .	5,500	30th April.
Bergen-op-Zoom, . . .	4,000	24th April.
	92,200	

—See SCHOELL, *Histoire des Traités de Paix*, x. 432, 433.

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1st January 1792, with the exception of various cessions of small territories, some to France by the neighbouring powers, others by France to them, for the sake of defining more clearly, and for mutual advantage, its frontiers, but which, upon a balance of gains and losses, gave it an increase of four hundred and fifty thousand souls. Avignon, however, and the country of Venaisin, the first conquests of the Revolution, were secured to it. France, on the other hand, consented to abandon all pretensions to any territories beyond these limits, and to throw no obstacle in the way of fortifications being erected on any points which the new governments of those countries might deem expedient. Holland was to be an independent state, under the sovereignty of the house of Orange, with an accession of territory drawn from the union with Flanders; Germany was to be independent, but under the guarantee of a federal union; Switzerland independent, governed by itself; Italy divided into sovereign states. The free navigation of the Rhine was expressly stipulated. Malta, the ostensible cause of the renewal of the war after the treaty of Amiens, was ceded in perpetuity, with its dependencies, to Great Britain; and she, on her part, agreed to restore all the colonies taken from France or her allies during the war, with the exception of the islands of Tobago, St Lucie, and the portion of St Domingo formerly belonging to Spain, which was to be restored to that power, in the West, and the Isle of France in the East Indies. Guadaloupe, Martinique, and Le Guyane were restored to France. France was to be permitted to form commercial establishments in the East Indies, but under the condition that no more troops were to be sent there than were necessary for the purpose of police; and she regained the right of fishing on the coast of Newfoundland and in the gulf of St Lawrence. The fleet at Antwerp, which consisted of thirty-eight ships of the line and fifteen frigates, was to be divided into three parts, of which two were to be restored to France, and one to the King of Holland. The ships, however, of France which had fallen into the hands of the Allies before the armistice of 23d April, and especially the fleet at the Texel, were to remain with the Allies; and they were immediately made over to the King of Holland.¹ All

¹ Martens.
Sup. or N. R.
ii. 1; and
Schoell, x.
486, 496.

subordinate points and matters of detail were, by common consent, referred to a congress of all the great powers, which it was agreed should assemble at Vienna in the succeeding autumn.

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Such were the public articles of the treaty; but, in addition to these, there was a secret treaty also signed, which contained articles of considerable importance, and which pointed in no obscure manner to the policy to be pursued for the reconstruction of the balance of power in Europe. They related chiefly to the disposal of the immense territories, containing no less than 15,360,000 souls, which had been severed from Napoleon's empire, besides 16,000,000 more from its external dependencies, which were now in great part at the disposal of the Allied powers. The leading principle which regulated these distributions was, to strengthen the second-rate states bordering upon France, from the weakness of which she had hitherto always been able to make successful irruptions from her own territories, before the more distant sovereigns could come to their support. To guard against this danger, it was provided, that Piedmont should receive an accession of territory by the incorporation of Genoa with her dominions, the latter town being declared a free port; that the reconstruction of Switzerland, as agreed on by the Allied powers, should be ratified by France; that Flanders, between the Scheldt and the Meuse, should be annexed to Holland; and the German states on the left bank of the Rhine, which had been conquered from France, divided between Holland and Prussia.¹

48.
Secret articles
of the treaty.

¹ Cap. Cent
Jours, i. 18,
19.

Such was the treaty of Paris, the most glorious that England had ever concluded—glorious, even more from what she abandoned than what she retained of her conquests. With her enemy absolutely at her feet—with half of France overrun by four hundred thousand victorious troops, her capital taken, and her Emperor virtually a prisoner in exile—she gave to this prostrate foe no inconsiderable *accession* of territory in Europe, and restored four-fifths of her colonial possessions. Not a village was reft from old France; not a military contribution was levied; not a palace or museum was rifled; not an indignity to the national honour was offered. All

49.
Reflections
on the treaty
of Paris.

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that was done was to restore the provinces which, since her career of conquest began in 1794, she had wrested from the adjoining powers. The French museums, loaded with the spoils of Italy, Germany, Spain, Flanders, and Holland, were left untouched: even the sacred relics of Sans-Souci, and of the great king of Prussia, were unreclaimed. So far were the Allies from following Napoleon's bad example, in seizing every article of value wherever he went, that when they had them in their power they did not even reclaim their own.*

50.
And on the
generosity of
the Allied
sovereigns.

What did Napoleon do to Prussia in similar circumstances, in 1807? Why, he imposed on that small state, with only seven millions of inhabitants, a war contribution of £26,000,000, and severed from it the half of its dominions!† What did he do to Austria by the treaty of Vienna, in 1809? Why, he imposed on it a contribution of £9,500,000, and wrested from it a fourth of the monarchy!‡ If the Allies had acted in a similar spirit in 1814, how much of the territories of old France would they have left to its inhabitants? What crushing contributions would they have levied, for many a long and weary year, on the vanquished! what havoc would they have made in all the museums and royal palaces of France! Doubtless, their forbearance was not entirely owing to disinterestedness; doubtless, they had jealousies of their own to consider, political objects of their own to gain, in reconciling France to the new dynasty. But their policy was founded on a noble spirit—it rested on the principle of eradicating hostility by generosity, and avenging injury by forgiveness. The result proved that, in doing so, they proceeded on too exalted an estimate of human nature.

51.
Return of
the Pope to
Rome.
April 2.

In the general settlement of Europe, after the revolutionary deluge had subsided, the fate of one of the most persevering, and not the least illustrious, of Napoleon's opponents, must not be overlooked. Pius VII., after having been taken away, by orders of Napoleon, from Fontainebleau on the 23d January, in

* Napoleon had some of these with him, in the room in which he died at St Helena. "Vous examinez," said he, "cette grande horloge; elle servait de réveil-matin au Grand Frédéric. Je l'ai prise à Potsdam: c'était tout ce que valait la Prusse."—ANTOMARCHI, *Derniers Jours de Napoleon*, i. 97.

† *Ante*, Chap. li. § 7.

‡ *Ante*, Chap. lix. § 71.

virtue of the convention already mentioned,* had been still, under one pretext or another, detained in the French territory, and was still in Provence when Paris was taken. One of the first cares of the provisional government was, by a decree, to direct him to be instantly set at liberty, and conducted to the Italian frontiers with all the honours due to his rank. He entered Italy accordingly, and at Cesina, near Parma, had an interview with Murat, who exhibited to him the original of a memorial, which a number of the nobles and chief inhabitants of Rome had, at his instigation, presented to the Allied powers, praying to have the Roman states incorporated with one of the secular powers of Italy. Without looking at the memoir so as to know what signatures were attached to it, the generous pontiff at once threw the document into the fire. Continuing his route by slow journeys, which the feeble state of his health rendered necessary, he reached the neighbourhood of Rome on the 23d, and entered that city on the 24th May—nearly five years after he had been violently carried off, at dead of night, by the troops of Napoleon. Opinions had been divided previously as to the expedience of his return; and those who had signed the memorial to the Allies justly dreaded the effects of his resentment. But the generous proceeding at Cesina overcame all hearts, and he was received with unanimous and heartfelt expressions of satisfaction. Stricken by conscience, some of the nobles who had signed the memorial came next day to request forgiveness. "Have we not some faults, too, to reproach ourselves with?" replied the generous pontiff; "let us bury our injuries in oblivion."¹

The world had never seen—probably the world will never again see—so marvellous a spectacle as the streets of Paris exhibited from the 31st March, when the entry of the Allies took place, till the 16th June, when, upon their finally retiring, the service of the posts was restored to the national guard of the capital. The dream of Ariosto was realised under circumstances yet more striking—round a greater than Charlemagne all the princes and

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April 2.

¹ Artaud,
ii. 367, 381.
Pacca, ii.
257, 261.

52.
Extraordi-
nary spec-
tacle which
Paris exhi-
bited at this
period.

* *Ante*, Chap. lxxiv. § 43.

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ambassadors of the world were assembled.* In a state of the most profound tranquillity, with the most absolute protection of life and property, even of the most obnoxious of their former enemies, the capital of Napoleon was occupied by the troops of twenty different nations, whom the oppression of his government had roused to arms from the wall of China to the Pillars of Hercules. As if by the wand of a mighty enchanter, all the angry passions, the fierce contentions, which had so long deluged the world with blood, seemed to be stilled; victors and vanquished sank down side by side into the enjoyment of repose. Beside the veterans of Napoleon's Old Guard, who still retained, even in the moment of defeat, and when surrounded by the might of foreign powers, their martial and undaunted aspect, were to be seen the superb household troops of Russia and Prussia; the splendid cuirassiers of Austria shone in glittering steel; the iron veterans of Blucher still eyed the troops of France with jealousy, as if their enmity was unappeased even by the conquest of their enemies. The nomad tribes of Asia and the Ukraine strolled in wonder along every street; groups of Cossack bivouacs lay in the Champs-Élysées; the Bashkirs and Tartars gazed with undisguised avidity, but restrained hands, on the gorgeous display of jewellery and dresses which were arrayed in the shop windows, to attract the notice of the numerous princes and potentates who thronged the metropolis. Every morning the noble columns of the Preobazinsky and Simonefsky guards marched out of the barracks of the Ecole Militaire, to exercise on the Champ de Mars; at noon, reviews of cavalry succeeded, and the earth shook under the thundering charge of the Russian cuirassiers. Often in the evening the Allied monarchs visited the opera, or some of the theatres;¹ and the applause with which they were received resembled what might have been expected if Napoleon had returned in triumph from the capture of

¹ Personal observation. Dan. 408, 409.

* “Dentro a Parigi non sariano state
L' innumerabil genti peregrine,
Povere e ricche, e d'ogni qualitate,
Che v'eran, greche, barbare e latine.
Tanti signori, e imbascerie mandate
Di tutto 'l mondo, non aveano fine.”

Orlando Furioso, xlv. 75

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their capitals. Early in June, Wellington, who had been appointed ambassador of England at the court of the Tuileries, arrived among them; he was received with enthusiasm; and the opera-house never shook with louder applause than when he first made his appearance there, after the battle of Toulouse.

One peculiarity in the Russian and Prussian armies, which most excited the attention of the Parisians, was the universal and simple feeling of piety with which they were animated. To an infidel generation, who had never known Christianity but in its corruption, and judged of its spirit only from the misrepresentations of its enemies, this circumstance was the subject of general astonishment and partial admiration. "We listened," says a contemporary French journalist, "to young Russian officers, on the very day of their triumphant entrance into Paris, who spoke of their exploits from Moscow to the Seine as of deeds which had been accomplished under the immediate guidance of divine Providence; and ascribing to themselves only the glory of having been chosen as the instruments for the fulfilment of the divine decree. They spoke of their victories without exultation, and in language so simple, that it seemed to us as if they did so by common consent, out of politeness. They showed us a silver medal, worn equally by their generals and private soldiers as a badge of distinction.* On the one side is represented the eye of Providence, and on the other these words from Scripture, 'Not unto us, not unto us, but to thy name.' We must allow it is religion which has formed the sacred bond of their union for the benefit of mankind, the emblems of which their troops wear on their garments. No human motive could have induced them to make sacrifices unparalleled in history."¹ The Emperor Alexander uniformly expressed the same sentiments. "This arm," said that noble prince, "did no more than other men's—each did his duty. Could I do less? Not I, more than they, achieved the victory. 'Twas Providence." Such was the spirit which conquered the French Revolution; such, on the testimony of the vanquished, the principles which gave final victory to the

53.
Universal
religious feel-
ings of the
Allied troops.

¹ Journal
des Debats,
April 3,
1814. Coxe's
Memoirs of
Russia, v. 173.

* The medal of 1812.

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¹ Dan. 407,
408.

arms of the desert in the centre of civilised infidelity. The opposite characters of the two contending powers were perfectly represented by one circumstance: Napoleon placed on his triumphal column, in the Place Vendôme, a statue of *himself*; Alexander, as has been already mentioned, caused the column which the gratitude of the senate decreed to him at St Petersburg to be surmounted by a statue of *Religion* extending her arms to bless mankind.¹

54.
Grand review
of the Allied
troops at
Paris.
May 20.

Before the Allied armies broke up from Paris, a grand review took place of the whole troops in and around that city, comprising the *élite* of the Allied forces then in France. Seventy thousand men, with eighty-two guns, were drawn up three deep on the road, from the barrier of Neuilly to the bridge of St Cloud: they occupied the whole space, and certainly a more magnificent military spectacle never was witnessed. When the Emperor Alexander, with the Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia, and all the marshals and generals of their respective armies, rode along the line, the acclamations of the troops, at first loud and overpowering, then getting fainter and fainter as they died away in the distance, were inexpressibly sublime. Breaking then into open column, the whole defiled past the sovereigns, and such was the splendour of their array, that it seemed scarcely conceivable that they had so recently been engaged in a campaign of unexampled duration and hardship. The Russian guard in particular, twenty, and the Prussian, eight thousand strong, with hardly a man in their ranks under six feet high, attracted, by the brilliancy of their equipments and the precision of their movements, universal admiration. The eye could scarcely bear the dazzling lines of light which, under a bright sun and a cloudless sky, were reflected from the cuirasses and sabres of the cavalry. Proudly the celebrated regiments of the Russian guards, Preobazinsky, Simonefsky, and Bonnet d'Or, marched past. In noble array, and with an erect air, the vast host pressed on: they passed round the massy pillars of the arch of Neuilly, begun by Napoleon to the honour of the Grand Army, defiled in silence over the Place of the Revolution, treading on the spot where Louis XVI. had fallen, and

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scarce cast an eye on the unfinished columns of the Temple of Glory, commenced after the triumph of Jena. Among the countless multitude whom the extraordinary events of the period had drawn together from every part of Europe to the French capital, and the brilliancy of this spectacle had concentrated in one spot, was one young man who had watched with intense interest the progress of the war from his earliest years, and who, having hurried from his paternal roof in Edinburgh on the first cessation of hostilities, then conceived the first idea of narrating its events; and amidst its wonders inhaled that ardent spirit, that deep enthusiasm, which, sustaining him through fifteen subsequent years of travelling and study, and fifteen more of composition, has at length realised itself in the present history.

Having finally arranged matters at Paris, the Allied sovereigns, before retiring to their own dominions, paid a visit to London. It belongs to the historians of England to recount the festivities of that joyous period—that Cloth of Gold of modern times, when the greatest, and wisest, and bravest in Europe came to do voluntary homage to the free people whose energy and perseverance had saved themselves by their firmness, and the world by their example. Suffice it to say, as a topic interesting to general history, that the Allied monarchs left Paris on the 5th July, and reached Dover on the 8th: that they were received with extraordinary enthusiasm by all classes in England, from the peasant to the throne: that they were feasted with more than the usual magnificence at Guildhall, and received with more than wonted splendour at the Palace: that the Emperor of Russia was invested with the Order of the Garter at Carlton House; and that at Oxford both he and the King of Prussia, as well as Marshal Blucher, were arrayed with all the academic honours which a grateful nation could bestow: that a splendid naval review at Portsmouth, where thirty ships of the line and frigates manœuvred together, conveyed an adequate idea of the naval power of England: and that, satiated with pomp and the cheers of admiration, they embarked for the Continent on their return to their own dominions. But two circumstances connected with this visit, at the close of the longest, most costly, and

55.
Visit of the
Allied sovereigns to
England.

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¹ Ann. Reg.
1814, 43, 55.
Chronicle.
Croly, Life
of Geo. IV.
ii. 67, 71.

bloodiest war mentioned in history, deserve to be recorded, as characteristic of the British empire at this period. When Alexander visited the arsenal at Woolwich, and saw the acres covered with cannon and shot in that stupendous emporium of military strength, he said, "Why, this resembles rather the preparation of a great nation for the commencement of a war, than the stores still remaining to it at its termination." And as the same monarch surveyed the hundreds of thousands who assembled to see him in Hyde Park, he was so impressed with the universal well-being of the spectators, that he exclaimed, "This is indeed imposing; but where are the people?"¹

56.
Remarkable
circumstance
which led to
Prince Leo-
pold of Saxe-
Coburg com-
ing to Eng-
land.

One other circumstance, of domestic interest in its origin, but of vast importance in its ultimate results, deserves to be recorded of this eventful period. At Paris, during the stay of the Allied monarchs, resided Lord —, who had filled with acknowledged ability a high diplomatic situation at their headquarters during the later period of the war. His lady, of high rank, had joined him to partake in the festivities of that brilliant period, and with her a young relative, equally distinguished by her beauty and talents, then appearing in all the freshness of opening youth. A frequent visitor at this period in Lord —'s family was a young officer, then an aide-de-camp to the Grand-duke Constantine, a younger brother of an ancient and illustrious family in Germany, but who, like many other scions of nobility, had more blood in his veins than money in his pocket. The young aide-de-camp was speedily captivated by the graces of the English lady; and when the sovereigns were about to set out for England, whither Lord — was to accompany them, he bitterly lamented the scantiness of his finances, which prevented him from following in the train of such attraction. Lord — good-humouredly told him he should always find a place at his table when he was not otherwise engaged, and that he would put him in the way of seeing all the world in the British metropolis, which he would probably never see to such advantage again. Such an offer, especially when seconded by such influences, proved irresistible, and the young German gladly followed them to London.

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57.

Which led to
the Saxe-
Coburg
dynasty as-
cending the
throne of
England.

He was there speedily introduced to, and ere long distinguished by, the Princess Charlotte, whose projected alliance with the Prince of Orange had recently before been broken off. Though the princess remarked him, however, it was nothing more at that time than a passing regard; for her thoughts were then more seriously occupied by another. Having received, at the same time, what he deemed some encouragement, the young soldier proposed to the princess, and was refused, and subsequently went to Vienna during the sitting of the congress at that place, where his susceptible heart was speedily engrossed in another tender affair. Invincible obstacles, however, presented themselves to the realisation of the Princess Charlotte's views, which had led to her first rejection of the gallant German: he received a friendly hint from London to make his attentions to the fair Austrian less remarkable: he returned to the English capital, again proposed to the English princess, and was accepted. It was PRINCE LEOPOLD OF SAXE-COBURG; and his subsequent destiny and that of his family exceeds all that romance has figured of the marvellous. He married the heiress of England; after her lamented death he espoused a daughter of France: he was offered the throne of Greece; he accepted the crown of Belgium. In consequence of his elevation, one of his nephews has married the heiress of Portugal, another the Queen of England; and the accidental fancy of a young German officer for a beautiful English lady has, in its ultimate results, given three kingdoms to his family, placed on one of his relatives the crown of the greatest empire that has existed in the world since the fall of Rome, and restored to England, in hazardous times, the inestimable blessing of a direct line of succession to the throne.*

The march upon St Dizier was unquestionably expedient

* It would be indelicate, during the life of some of the persons mentioned in the preceding curious narration, to give their names to the public. Those acquainted with the elevated circles of English society at that period, will have no difficulty in filling them up; and the statement may be relied on, as the author had it from some of the parties immediately concerned. The reader of Italian history will recollect the corresponding anecdote of the peasant Sforza, when invited to enter the army by a recruiting party which was passing the field where he was pruning vines. He hesitated whether to accept or decline the offer; and at length put his shears on a branch, saying if they fell he would go, if they were supported by the branch he would remain. They fell: he joined the party, became Duke of Milan, and founded the house of that name.

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58.

Reflections
on the de-
cisive move-
ment on St
Dizier.

as a measure of military policy, and as such it may be regarded as the last of those brilliant movements in that astonishing campaign, which alone would be sufficient to give immortality to the name of Napoleon. When his whole remaining resources had been fairly worn out in that marvellous struggle, he had a fair prospect by this felicitous conception of renewing the contest on fresh ground, hitherto comparatively unexhausted, and of tripling his force in the field by the addition of the garrisons drawn from the frontier fortresses. Yet this movement, beyond all question, proved Napoleon's ruin ; for, by giving room for the manly counsels of Blucher and the Russian Emperor, it exposed the capital to the assault of irresistible forces, and led to the overthrow of the French Emperor's power in the very quarter where he had deemed it most securely founded. And that he fully appreciated the danger of an attack there, is decisively proved by the haste with which he at once abandoned all the military advantages of the march on St Dizier to avert it, and the decisive results which followed the start which the Allies had got of him at the capital by only eight-and-forty hours.

59.

Difference
between
France and
the other
European
monarchies,
as regards the
effect of the
occupation of
their capitals.

It was not thus with the other European monarchies, when they were involved in disaster. Vienna was taken by Napoleon in 1805 ; but the Austrians fought the battle of Austerlitz, and had wellnigh restored affairs after that event : it was again taken in 1809, but the monarchy stood firm, and reduced the invader to the verge of ruin at Aspern. Berlin was captured by the Russians in 1760, and by Napoleon in 1806 ; but that did not prevent the Great Frederick, in the first instance, from bringing to a glorious close the Seven Years' War, nor Frederick William, in the second, from gallantly struggling with his Russian allies for existence in the furthest corner of his dominions, amidst the snows of Eylau. Madrid fell an easy prey, in 1808, to the mingled fraud and violence of the French Emperor ; but Spain, notwithstanding, continued to maintain a mortal struggle for six long years with the forces of Napoleon. Russia was pierced to the heart in 1812, and her ancient capital became the spoil of the invader ; but Alexander persevered in the contest with unabated vigour, and from

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the flames of Moscow arose the fire which delivered the world. How, then, did it happen that the fall of the capital, which in all these other cases, so far from being the termination, was rather the commencement of the most desperate and protracted period of the war, should in France alone have had a totally opposite effect; and that the capture of Paris should not merely have been the conquest of a kingdom, but the overthrow of a system, and the change of a dynasty, which still spread its ramifications over the half of Europe?

The cause of this remarkable difference is to be found in the decisive distinction, in the last crisis, between a revolutionary and an established government, and the different motives to human action which the two bring to bear upon mankind. A revolution being founded in general on the triumph of violence, robbery, and treason, over fidelity, order, and loyalty—and almost always accompanied in its progress by a hideous effusion of blood and spoliation of property—its leaders, if successful, have no means of rousing or retaining the attachment of their followers, but by constantly appealing to the passions of the world. Equality, patriotism, liberty, glory, constitute the successive and brilliant meteors which they launch forth to dazzle and inspire mankind. They have an instinctive dread of the influences of Heaven; all allusion to a Supreme Being appears to them fanaticism; they would willingly bury all thoughts of another world in oblivion. So long as success attends their efforts, the powerful tie of worldly interest, or temporary passion, binds together the unholy alliance, and its force proves for a considerable period irresistible. But the very principle which constitutes its strength in prosperity, affords the measure of its weakness in adversity: its idol being worldly success, when that idol is pierced to the heart by the destroyer, “the ocean vault falls in, and all are crushed.” The same motives of action, the same principles of conduct, which make them unanimously rally round the eagles of the conqueror, necessarily lead them as generally to abandon the standards of the unfortunate. The enthusiasm of Austerlitz, however different in its aspect, sprang from the same source as the defections of

60.
Causes of this
difference.

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Fontainebleau. In both cases they were true to one and the same principle—self-interest.

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The existence of this motive, as the moving general principle, is quite consistent with the utmost generosity and heroism in *individual* cases, though these unhappily daily become less frequent in the late stages of the national malady. Nay, the absorbing passion for individual advancement, which in the more advanced stages of revolution comes to obliterate every other feeling, springs from the ill-regulated impulse given in the outset to the generous affections. For such is the deceitfulness of sin, and the proneness to self-aggrandisement in human nature, that the passions cannot be set violently in motion, even by the disinterested feelings, without the selfish ere long obtaining the mastery of the current; as in a town carried by a storm, how sublime soever may be the heroism, how glorious the self-sacrifice, with which the troops mount the breach, the strife, if successful, is sure to terminate in the worst atrocities of pillage, rape, and conflagration. It is religion alone which, by opening a scene of aspiration beyond the grave, can provide a counterpoise to the overwhelming torrent of worldly ambition, which can render men nobly superior to all the storms of time, and give the same fidelity to a falling, which revolution secures to a rising cause.

61.

It is that individual advancement was the main-spring of the Revolution.

That this, and not any peculiar fickleness or proneness to change, was the real cause of the universal and disgraceful desertion by France of its revolutionary chief, when he became unfortunate, is decisively proved by the consideration that, in other times, even in France itself, in those parts of the country, or among those classes where the old influences still survived, the most glorious examples of constancy and fidelity had been found. In the course of the wars with England, Paris was not only taken but occupied eighteen years by the English armies; an English king was crowned King of France at Rheims; and so complete was the prostration of the country, that an English corps, not ten thousand strong, marched right through the heart of France, from Calais to Bayonne, without encountering any opposition. But that did not subjugate the French people, or hinder them from glori-

62.

Wide difference from the fidelity of the monarchy.

ously rallying behind the Loire, and twice expelling the English from their territory. The League long held Paris; but that did not prevent Henry IV., at the head of the forces of the provinces, from laying siege to it, and placing himself, a Protestant chief, on the throne of France. Where, in the annals of the world, shall we find more touching examples of heroism in misfortune, and constancy in adversity, than in La Vendée, amid the republican massacres, or in Lyons under the *mitrallades* of Fouché and Collot d'Herbois? Even in Paris, stripped as it had been of almost the whole of the nobility by the previous emigration, five hundred devoted gentlemen hastened to the Tuileries, on the 10th August 1792, to meet death with the royal family. But no one of the new noblesse went from thence to Fontainebleau to share exile with Napoleon on the eve of his overthrow.

It is in vain, therefore, to attempt to shelter the tergiversation of Fontainebleau under any peculiarity of national character; or to ascribe to human nature what is evidently owing, in this instance at least, to its baseness under the vices of a revolution. It is equally vain to allege that necessity drove the French leaders to this measure; that they had no alternative; and that desertion of Napoleon, or national ruin, stared them in the face. If that were the case, what condemnation so severe could be passed on the Revolutionary system, as the admission that it had brought matters, under chiefs and leaders of the nation's own appointment, to such a pass that nothing remained but to ruin their country, or betray the hero whom they had placed upon the throne? But, in truth, it was misfortune, and the stoppage of the robbery of Europe, which alone rendered Napoleon unpopular, and undermined the colossal power which the Revolution had reared up. Not a whisper was heard against his system of government so long as it was victorious; it was at the zenith of its popularity when, after twelve years' continuance, he crossed the Niemen. It was when he became unfortunate that it was felt to be insupportable. If the French eagles had gone on from conquest to conquest, France would have yielded up the last drop of its blood to his ambition; and he would have lived and died

63.
It was misfortune alone which rendered Napoleon unpopular.

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surrounded by the adulation of its whole inhabitants, though he had deprived all its mothers of their sons, and all the civilised world of its possessions.

64.

Any restoration of the Revolutionary system was impossible at this period.

No position is more frequently maintained by the French writers of the liberal school, than that Napoleon perished because he departed from the principles of the Revolution: that the monarch forgot the maxims of the citizen, the Emperor the simplicity of the general; that he stifled the national voice till it had become extinct, and curbed the popular energies till they had been forgotten; that he fell at last, less under the bayonets of banded Europe, than in consequence of his despotic terror at putting arms into the hands of his own people; and that, if he had revived in 1814 the revolutionary energy of 1793, he would have proved equally victorious. They might as well say, that if the old worn-out debauchee of sixty would only resume the vigour and the passions of twenty-five, he would extricate himself from all his ailments. Doubtless he would succeed in so doing, by such a miracle, for a time; and he might, if so renovated, run again for twenty years the career of pleasure, licentiousness, suffering, and decay. But is such a restoration in the last stages of excitement, whether individual or national, possible? Is it desirable? Was there ever such a thing heard of as a people, after twenty-five years' suffering and exhaustion from the indulgence of their social passions, again commencing the career of delusion and ruin? Never. Men are hardly ever warned by the sufferings of preceding generations, but they are never insensible to the agonies of their own.

65.

A pacific career was impracticable to Napoleon.

Equally extravagant is the idea frequently started by a more amiable and philanthropic class of writers, that it was Napoleon's ambition which ruined the cause of the Revolution; and that if he had only turned his sword into a ploughshare and cultivated the arts of peace, after he had gained possession of supreme power, as he had done those of war to attain it, he might have successfully established in France the glorious fabric of constitutional freedom. They know little of human nature—of the deceitfulness of sin, and downward progress of the career of passion—who think such a transformation practicable.

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They know still less of the laws of the moral world, who deem such a result consistent with the administration of a just and beneficent Providence. Are the habits necessary for the building up of constitutional freedom; the industry, self-denial, and frugality, which must constitute its bases in the great body of the people; the moderation, disinterestedness, and general sway of virtue, which must characterise the leaders of the state, to be acquired amidst the total breaking up of society, the closing of all the channels of pacific industry, the excitement and animation of war? Is the general abandonment of religion, the universal worship of the idol of worldly success, the sacrifice of every principle at the shrine of self-interest, the school in which the domestic and social virtues are to be learned? Are robbery, devastation, and murder, the sweeping away of the property of ages, the pouring out like water the blood of the innocent, the steps by which, under a just Providence, the glorious fabric of durable freedom is to be erected? We might well despair of the fortunes of the human race, if the French Revolution could have given the people engaged in it such a blessing.

Napoleon knew well the fallacy of this idea. He constantly affirmed that he was not to be accused for the wars which he undertook: that they were imposed upon him by an invincible necessity: that glory and success—in other words, perpetual conquest—were the conditions of his tenure of power: that he was but the head of a military republic, which would admit of no pause in its career: that conquest was with him essential to existence, and that the first pause in the march of victory would prove the commencement of ruin. This history has indeed been written to little purpose if it is not manifest, even to the most inconsiderate, that he was right in these ideas, and that it was not himself, but the spirit of his age, which is chargeable with his fall.* The ardent and

66.
Napoleon's
views of the
compulsion
under which
he acted.

* Charlemagne felt the force of a similar necessity: it is common to all men of capacity who find themselves at the head of affairs in a powerful state, long torn by internal dissensions. "Charlemagne devenu seul Roi des Francs a la conviction profonde qu'il faut occuper incessamment la nation belliqueuse qu'il gouverne; s'il ne la mene à la conquête, sa force se tournera en guerre civile, comme sous les Mérovingiens; il a des hommes vaillans et impetueux, il faut qu'il les conduise à travers les fleuves, et les montagnes, dans de nouvelles terres; son habileté consiste à jeter ses compagnons d'armes sur les peuples et les territoires qui l'environnent; car il leur doit du butin, des terres, et des dominations, s'il veut éviter qu'ils se devorent entre eux."—CAPEFIGUE, *Hist.*

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yet disappointed passions of the Revolution, the millions thrown out of pacific employment, the insatiable desires awakened, the boundless anticipations formed, during the progress of that great convulsion, could by possibility find vent only in external conquest. The simple pursuits of industry, the unobtrusive path of duty, the heroic self-denial of virtue, the only sure bases of general freedom, were insupportable to men thus violently excited. If we would know where the career of conquest, once successfully commenced by a democratic state, must of necessity lead, we have only to look to the empire of Rome in ancient, or of British India in modern times. Even now the fever still burns in the veins of France: her maniac punishment is not yet terminated. Not all the blood shed by Napoleon, not her millions of citizens slaughtered, have been able to subdue the fierce ebullition; * the senate and legislative body obsequiously voted, the people slavishly acquiesced in, his ceaseless demands for the blood of their children, happy that he asked less than they

de Charlemagne, i. 156. This might pass without changing a word, but "Mérovingiens" into "Caputiens," for a true and graphic description of Napoleon's situation, as often drawn by himself after the strife of the Revolution. The position of Louis XIV., after the wars of the Fronde, was precisely similar, and forced him into a similar career of foreign aggression and conquest.

* Levies of men in France since the Revolution :—

1793,	-	-	-	-	300,000
1793,	-	-	-	-	1,200,000
1798,	-	-	-	-	200,000
1799,	-	-	-	-	200,000
1801,	-	-	-	-	30,000
17th Jan. 1805,	-	-	-	-	60,000
24th Sept. 1805,	-	-	-	-	80,000
4th Dec. 1806,	-	-	-	-	80,000
7th April 1807,	-	-	-	-	80,000
21st Jan. 1808,	-	-	-	-	80,009
10th Sept. 1808,	-	-	-	-	160,000
18th April 1809,	-	-	-	-	30,000
18th April 1809,	-	-	-	-	10,000
5th Oct. 1809,	-	-	-	-	36,000
13th Dec. 1810,	-	-	-	-	120,000
13th Dec. 1810,	-	-	-	-	40,000
20th Dec. 1811,	-	-	-	-	120,000
13th March 1812,	-	-	-	-	100,000
1st Sept. 1812,	-	-	-	-	137,000
11th Jan. 1813,	-	-	-	-	250,000
3d April 1813,	-	-	-	-	180,000
24th Aug. 1813,	-	-	-	-	30,000
9th Oct. 1813,	-	-	-	-	280,000
15th Nov. 1813,	-	-	-	-	300,000
Total,	-	-	-	-	4,103,000

—CAPEFIGUE, v. 510; and *Moniteurs* of the above dates.

would have given.* The double conquest of her capital has been unable to tame her pride; and nothing but the consummate talents and courage of Louis Philippe, joined to the philosophic wisdom of M. Guizot, have been able to prevent her from rushing again into the career of glory, of suffering, and of punishment.

The French Revolution, therefore, is to be regarded as a great whole, of which the enthusiasm and fervour of 1789 were the commencement; the rebellion against government and massacre of the King, the second stage; the Reign of Terror and charnel-house of La Vendée, the third; the conquests and glory of Napoleon, the fourth; the subjugation of France and treachery of Fontainebleau, the consummation. Its external degradation and internal infamy at the latter period, were as necessary a part of its progress, as inevitable a result of its principles, as the harvest reaped in autumn is of the seed sown in spring. The connexion—the necessary connexion between the two, now stands revealed in colours of imperishable light; they are stamped in characters of fire on the adamantine tablets of history. Therefore it is that any narrative of the Revolution which does not follow it out to its fall, must necessarily be imperfect, both in the fidelity of its picture and the truth of its moral. To stop at the accession of the Directory, or the seizure of supreme power by Napoleon, as many have done, is to halt in our account of a fever at the ninth or thirteenth day, when the crisis did not come on till the twenty-first. And he who, after reflecting on the events of this marvellous progress, in which the efforts of ages and the punishment of generations were all concentrated into one quarter of a century, does not believe in the Divine superintendence of human affairs, and the reward of virtuous and punishment of guilty nations in this world, would not be converted though one rose from the dead.

An author in whom simplicity or beauty of expression often conceals depth and justice of thought, has thus explained the mode of the Divine administration, and the manner in which it works out its decrees by the instrumentality of free agents:—"The beauty and magnificence,"

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67.
View of the
progressive
phases of the
Revolution.

* "Sedere Patres censere parati,
i regnum, si templa sibi, jugulumque Senatus,
xillumque petat: melius, quod plura jubere
rubuit, quam Roma pati."—LUCAN, *Pharsalia*, iii. 110.

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68.

Agency by
which the
Divine gov-
ernment of
nations is
carried on.

says Blair, "of the universe are much heightened by its being an extensive and complicated system, in which a variety of springs are made to play, and a multitude of different movements are with admirable art regulated and kept in order. Interfering interests and jarring passions are in such manner balanced against one another, such proper checks are placed on the violence of human pursuits, and the wrath of man is made so to hold its course, that how opposite soever the several motions at first appear to be, yet they all concur at last in one result. While among the multitudes that dwell on the face of the earth, some are submissive to the Divine authority, some rise up in rebellion against it; others, absorbed in their pleasures and pursuits, are totally inattentive to it; they are all so moved by an imperceptible influence from above, that the zeal of the dutiful, the wrath of the rebellious, and the indifference of the careless, contribute finally to the glory of God. All are governed in such a manner as suits their powers, and is consistent with their moral freedom; yet the various acts of these free agents all conspire to work out the eternal purposes of heaven. The system upon which the Divine government plainly proceeds, is, that men's own wickedness should be appointed to correct them, that they should be snared in the work of their own hands. When the vices of men require punishment to be inflicted, the Almighty is at no loss for the ministers of justice. No special interpositions of power are requisite. He has no occasion to step from his throne and interrupt the majestic order of nature. With the solemnity which befits Omnipotence, he pronounces, 'Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone.' He leaves transgressors to their own guilt, and punishment follows of course. *Their own sins do the work of justice.* They lift the scourge; and with every stroke they inflict on the criminal, they mix the severe admonition that he is reaping only the fruit of his own deeds, and deserves all that he suffers."¹

¹ Blair, iv.
Serm. 14;
and ii. Serm.
14.

Without pretending to explain the various modes by which this awful and mysterious system of Divine administration, in which ourselves are at once the free agents and the objects of reward and punishment, is carried on, it is impossible not to be struck with the powerful opera-

tion of two moral laws of our being, with the reality of which every one, from the experience of his own breast, as well as the observation of those around him, must be familiar. The first is, that every irregular passion or illicit desire acquires strength from the gratification which it receives, and becomes the more uncontrollable the more it is indulged. The second, that the power of self-denial and the energy of virtue increases with every occasion on which it is called forth, until at length it becomes a formed habit, and requires hardly any effort for its accomplishment. On the counteracting force of these two laws, the whole moral administration of the universe hinges; as its physical equilibrium is dependent on the opposite influences of the centripetal and centrifugal forces.

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69.

Universal
downward
progress of
sin.

It is by gradual and latent steps that the destruction of virtue, whether in the individual or in the community, begins. The first advances of sin are clothed in the garb of liberality and philanthropy: the colours it then assumes are the homage which vice pays to virtue. If the evil unveiled itself at the beginning—if the storm which is to uproot society discovered as it rose all its horrors, there are few who would not shrink from its contact. But its first appearance is so attractive that few are sensible of its real nature: and, strange to say, the most hardened egotism in the end derives its chief strength in the outset from the generous affections. By degrees “habit gives the passions strength, while the absence of glaring guilt seemingly justifies them; and, unawakened by remorse, the sinner proceeds in his course till he waxes bold in guilt and becomes ripe for ruin. We are imperceptibly betrayed; from one licentious attachment, one criminal passion, led on to another, till all self-government is lost, and we are hurried to destruction. In this manner, every criminal passion in its progress swells and blackens, till what was at first a small cloud, no bigger than a man’s hand rising from the sea, is found to carry the tempest in its womb.”¹ What is the career of the drunkard, the gamester, or the sensualist, but an exemplification of the truth of this picture? Reader, if you have any doubt of the reality of this moral law, search your own heart, call

70.

Gradual and
deceitful pro-
gress of vice.

¹ Blair, i.
177.

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to mind your own ways. Exactly the same principle applies to nations. What is the history of the French Revolution, in all its stages, but an exemplification of this truth when applied to social passions? And how did the vast colossus of earthly passion, which had so long bestrode the world, ultimately break up? Despite the bright and glowing colours with which its youth arose, despite the great and glorious deeds by which its manhood was emblazoned, it sank in the end amidst the basest and most degrading selfishness. It perished precisely as a gang of robbers does, in which, when the stroke of adversity is at last felt, each, true to the god of his idolatry, strives to save himself by betraying his leader. The same law which makes an apple fall to the ground regulates the planets in their course.

71.
And ascend-
ing career of
virtue.

The second moral principle, not less universal, alike in individuals and nations, than the first, is open to the daily observation of every one, equally in his own breast and the conduct of others. Every one has felt in his own experience, however little he may have practised it—every teacher of youth has ascertained by observation—every moralist from the beginning of time has enforced the remark as the last conclusion of wisdom—that the path of virtue is rough and thorny at the outset; that habits of industry and self-denial are to be gained only by exertion; that the ascent is rugged, the path steep, but that the difficulty diminishes as the effort is continued; and that, when the “summit is reached, the heaven is above your head, and at your feet the kingdom of Cashmere.” And such is the effect of effort strenuously made in the cause of virtue, that it purifies itself as it advances, and progressively casts off the intermixture of worldly passion, which often sullied the purity of its motives in the outset. Hence the constant elevation often observed in the character of good men as they advance in life, till at its close they almost seem to have lost every stain of human corruption, and to be translated, rather than raised, by death to immortality. It is in this moral law that the antagonist principle of social as well as individual evil is to be found, and it was by its operation upon successive nations that the dreadful nightmare of

the French Revolution was thrown off the world. Many selfish desires, much corrupt ambition, great moral weakness, numerous political sins, stained the first efforts of the coalition, and in them at that period England had her full share. For these sins they suffered and are suffering; and the punishment of Great Britain will continue as long as the national debt endures*—of Russia and Prussia as long as Poland festers, a thorn of weakness, in their sides. But how unworthy soever its champions at first may have been, the cause for which they contended was a noble one. It was that of religion, fidelity, and freedom; and as the contest rolled on they were purified in the only school of real amelioration—the school of suffering. Gradually the baser elements were washed out of the confederacy; the nations, after long agony, came comparatively pure out of the furnace. At last, instead of the selfishness and rapacity of 1794, were exhibited the constancy of Saragossa, the devotion of Aspern, the heroism of the Tyrol, the resurrection of Prussia; and the war, which had commenced with the partition of Poland and the attempted partition of France, terminated with the flames of Moscow and the pardon of Paris.

Is, then, the cause of freedom utterly hopeless? does agitation necessarily lead to rebellion, rebellion to revolution? and must the prophetic eye of wisdom ever anticipate in the infant struggles of liberty the blood of Robespierre, the carnage of Napoleon, the treachery of Fontainebleau? No. It is not the career of freedom, it is the career of sin which leads, and ever will lead, to such results. It is in the disregard of moral obligation when done with beneficent intentions; in the fatal maxim, that the end will justify the means; in the oblivion of the divine precept, that “evil is *not to be done* that good may come of it;” and not in any fatality connected with revolutions, that the real cause of this deplorable downward progress is to be found. And if the supporters of freedom would avoid this otherwise inevitable retribution; if they would escape being led on from desire to desire, from acquisition to acquisition, from passion to passion, from

72.
How alone
can this
downward
progress be
averted?

* If England had acted in the outset of the war as she did at the close, the contest would have been terminated in 1793, and £600,000,000 saved from the national debt.

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crime to crime, till a Moscow retreat drowns their hopes in blood, or a treachery of Fontainbleau for ever disgraces them in the eyes of mankind—they must resolutely in the outset withstand the tempter, and avoid all measures, whatever their apparent expedience may be, which are not evidently based on immutable justice. If this, the only compass in the dark night of revolution, is not steadily observed; if property is ever taken without compensation being given; or blood shed without the commission of crimes to which that penalty is by law attached; or institutions uprooted, sanctioned by the experience of ages, when their modification was practicable; if, in short, the principle is acted on, that the end will justify the means, unbounded national calamities are at hand, and the very objects for which these sins are committed will be for ever lost.

73.
Is a free
government
possible in
France?

What are the difficulties which now beset the philosophic statesman in the attempt to construct the fabric of constitutional freedom in France? They are, that the national morality has been destroyed in the citizens of towns, in whose hands alone political power is vested: that there is no moral strength or political energy in the country: that no great proprietors exist to steady or direct general opinion, or counterbalance either the encroachments of the executive or the madness of the people: that France has fallen under a subjection to Paris, to which there is nothing comparable in European history: that the Prætorian guards of the capital rule the state: that nearly six millions of separate proprietors, the great majority at the plough, can achieve no more in the cause of freedom than an army of privates without officers: that commercial opulence and habits of sober judgment have been destroyed, never to revive: that a thirst for excitement every where prevails, and general selfishness disgraces the nation: that religion has never resumed its sway over the influential classes: that rank has ceased to be hereditary, and, having become the appanage of office only, is a virtual addition to the power of the sovereign; and that the general depravity renders indispensable a powerful centralised and military government. In what respect does this state of things differ from the institutions of China or the Byzantine empire? "The Romans," says Gibbon,

“aspired to be equal : they were levelled by the equality of Asiatic servitude.”

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74.

Reasons
which must
prevent it.

And yet, what are all these fatal peculiarities in the present political and social condition of France, but the effects of the very revolutionary measures which were the object of such unanimous support and enthusiasm at its commencement? This was the expedience for which the crimes of the Revolution were committed! For this it was that they massacred the king, guillotined the nobles, annihilated the church, confiscated the estates, rendered bankrupt the nation, denied the Almighty!—to exchange European for Asiatic civilisation; to destroy the foundations of freedom by crushing its strongest supports; and, by weakening the restraints of virtue, render unavoidable the fetters of force! Truly their sin has recoiled upon them; they have indeed received the work of their own hands. Mr Burke long ago said, “that without a complete and entire restitution of the confiscated property, liberty could never be re-established in France.” And the justice of the observation is now apparent, for by it alone could the elements and bulwarks of freedom be restored. But restitution, it will be said, is now impossible; the interests of the new proprietors are too immense, their political power too great; the Restoration was based on their protection, and they cannot be interfered with. Very possibly it is so, but that will not alter the laws of nature. If reparation has become impossible, RETRIBUTION must be endured; and that retribution, in the necessary result of the crimes of which it is the punishment, is the doom of oriental slavery.

APPENDIX.

CHAPTER LXXXIV.

Note A, page 15.

Public Income of Great Britain for the Year 1814, ending 5th January 1815.

Permanent Revenue.

Customs, - - - - -	£8,689,068	
Excise, - - - - -	19,451,102	
Stamps, - - - - -	5,826,363	
Land and assessed taxes, - - - - -	7,889,084	
Post Office, - - - - -	1,799,206	
Pensions, one shilling in the pound, - - - - -	19,504	
Salaries, sixpence in the pound, - - - - -	11,992	
Hackney coaches, - - - - -	24,081	
Hawkers and pedlars, - - - - -	15,910	
Total permanent and annual duties, - - - - -		£43,726,210
Small branches of the hereditary revenue, - - - - -		128,666

Extraordinary Resources.

Customs, - - - - -	£3,345,670	
Excise, - - - - -	6,401,097	
Property Tax, - - - - -	14,814,101	
Arrears of Income Tax, - - - - -	1,205	
Lottery, net profit (of which one-third part is for the service of Ireland,) - - - - -	334,853	
Moneys paid on account of the interest of loans raised for the service of Ireland, - - - - -	3,534,255	
On account of balance due by Ireland, on joint expenditure of the United Kingdom, - - - - -	2,770,000	
Carry forward, - - - - -	£31,281,181	£43,854,876

Brought forward,	-	£31,281,181	£43,854,876
On account of the Commissioners for issuing Exchequer bills for Grenada,	-	60,200	
On account of the interest of a loan granted to the Prince-regent of Portugal,	-	57,170	
Surplus fees of regulated public offices,	-	119,226	
Imprest money repaid by sundry public accountants, and other moneys paid to the public,	-	121,220	
Total, independent of loans,			£75,413,873
Loans paid into Exchequer, including the amount of those raised for the service of Ireland,	-	-	£36,078,047
Grand Total,			£111,491,920

—*Annual Register* for 1815, p. 322.

Public Expenditure.

1. For interest, &c., on the permanent debt of Great Britain unredeemed, including annuities for lives and terms of years,	-	-	£40,776,530
2. Interest on Exchequer bills,	-	-	2,256,707
3. Civil List,	-	£1,028,000	
4. Other charges on the Consolidated Fund, viz. :—			
Courts of Justice,	-	74,437	
Mint,	-	16,923	
Allowances to royal family,	-	368,048	
Salaries and allowances,	-	67,559	
Bounties,	-	6,158	
			1,561,125
5. Civil government of Scotland,	-	-	114,032
6. Other payments in anticipation of Exchequer receipts—			
Bounties for fisheries, manufactures, corn, &c.,	-	244,308	
Pensions on the hereditary revenue,	-	27,700	
Militia and deserters' warrants,	-	138,494	
			410,502
7. The Navy—	-	11,334,907	
Victualling department,	-	5,774,585	
The transport service,	-	4,852,074	
			21,961,566
8. Ordnance,	-	-	4,480,729
9. The army, viz. :—			
Ordinary services,	-	16,532,945	
Extraordinary services and subsidies,	-	27,287,234	
			43,820,179
Deduct the amount of remittances and advances to other countries,	-	10,024,623	
			33,795,556
10. Loans, &c., to other countries, viz. :—			
Ireland,	-	8,723,985	
Austria,	-	£1,475,632	
Denmark,	-	121,917	
France,	-	231,731	
Hanover,	-	739,879	
Holland,	-	267,759	
Oldenburg,	-	10,007	
Portugal,	-	1,500,000	
Prussia,	-	1,330,171	
Russia,	-	2,555,473	
Sicily,	-	316,666	
Spain,	-	586,388	
Carry forward,	£9,135,623	8,723,985	105,356,747

Brought forward,	-	£9,135,623	£8,723,985	£105,356,747
Sweden,	-	800,000		
Miscellaneous,	-	88,995		
			10,024,618	18,748,603

11. Miscellaneous services, viz:—

At home,	-	-	1,937,018	
Abroad,	-	-	447,573	
				2,384,591
				126,489,941

Deduct sums which, although included in this account,
form no part of the expenditure of Great Britain:—

Loan for Ireland,	-	-	8,723,985	
Interest at one per cent and management,	-	-		
Portuguese loan,	-	-	57,170	
Sinking Fund on Loan to the East India	-	-		
Company,	-	-	120,807	
				8,901,962

Total expenditure, -

£117,587,979

—*Annual Register* for 1815, page 342.

Note B, page 41.

Troops furnished by the Confederation of the Rhine to the Allies.

Second Corps.

Oldenburg,	-	-	-	1,500
Hanover,	-	-	-	20,000
Brunswick,	-	-	-	6,000
Bremen,	-	-	-	8,000
				35,000

Third Corps.

Kingdom of Saxony,	-	-	-	20,000
Duke of Saxe-Weimar,	-	-	-	2,800
Schwartzburg,	-	-	-	650
Anhalt,	-	-	-	800
				24,250

Fourth Corps.

Hesse-Cassel,	-	-	-	12,000
Berg,	-	-	-	5,000
Waldeck,	-	-	-	400
Lippe,	-	-	-	650
				18,050

Fifth Corps.

Würzburg,	-	-	-	2,000
Darmstadt,	-	-	-	4,000
Frankfort and Isenburg,	-	-	-	2,800
Reuss,	-	-	-	450
Nassau,	-	-	-	1,680
				10,930

Sixth Corps.

Württemberg,	-	-	-	12,000
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Seventh Corps.

Baden,	-	-	-	-	8,000
Hohenzollern,	-	-	-	-	250
Lichtenstein,	-	-	-	-	40
					<hr/>
					8,290
					<hr/>

—Koch, *Abrégé de Traités de Paix*, x. 357, 358.

Note C, page 48.

Composition and Strength of the Allied Armies who invaded France.

I. GRAND ARMY OF SCHWARTZENBERG.

Austrians.

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Batteries.	Cossack Regiments.	Cannon.
1. The 1st Light Division of Count Bubna,	5	30	3		24
2. The 2d Light Division of Lichtenstein,	5	18	2		16
3. The 1st Corps of Colloredo,	27	12	8		64
4. The 2d Corps of Lichtenstein,	21	12	8		64
5. The 3d Corps of Giulay,	25	13	7		56
6. The Corps of Frimont,	11	26	6		48
7. The Corps de Reserve of Prince Hesse-Homburg,	26	40	26		100
8.	8				
Total,					<hr/>
					128 151 60 — 372

Russians and other Allies.

9. The first Allied Corps, or the fifth Corps d'Armée of Wrede,	30	30	12		76
10. The seventh Allied Corps, or the fourth Corps d'Armée of Prince of Wurtemberg,	15	12	4		24
11. The Russian, or sixth Corps d'Armée of Wittgenstein,	23	20	7	5	72
12. The Russian Reserve of the Archduke Constantine,	35	72	15	21	116
13. The Prussian Guard,	8	8	3		24
Total,					<hr/>
					239 293 101 26 684

—Plotno, iii. *Appendix*, pp. 13, 14, 15.

Force of the above.

	Men.
Austrians, - - -	130,000
Bavarians, - - -	25,000
Württembergers, - - -	14,000
Russians, { Wittgenstein's corps,	19,350
{ Reserve, - - -	32,200
Prussian Guard, - - -	7,100
Guards of the Grand-duke of Baden,	1,000
The sixth Allied Corps, -	13,000
The eighth Allied Corps, -	10,000
Württemberg's reserve, - -	10,000
Total of the Grand Army,	<hr/> 261,650

II. THE ARMY OF THE NORTH.

Under the Command of the Crown-Prince of Sweden.

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Batteries.	Cannon.	Pioneer Companies.	Cossack Regiments.	Men.
1. The 3d Prussian Corps of Bulow,	45	50	12	96	2	..	30,000
2. The Russian Corps of Winzingerode,	35	30	14	162	..	19	30,000
3. The 3d German Corps d'Armée,	32	15	..	56	..	2	30,000
4. Walmoden's Corps, - -	..	..	..	..	..	..	15,000
5. The Swedish Army, - -	28	32	9	62	..	..	20,000
6. The 2d German Allied Corps,	32	16	4	..	..	..	30,000
Total of the Army of the North,	-	-	-	-	-	-	155,000
7. Dutch troops, - - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000
8. English troops under Graham,	-	-	-	-	-	-	9,000
9. Danish infantry, - -	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000
							184,000

—PLOTTO, iii. *Appendix*, pp. 29, 40.

III. THE ARMY OF SILESIA.

	Men.	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Batteries.	Cannon.	Pioneer Companies.	Cossack Regiments.
1. The first Prussian Corps d'Armée of York, - - -	18,931	31½	44	13	104	2	
2. The second Prussian Corps d'Armée of Kleist, - - -	20,000	37	44	14	112	2	
3. The Russian Corps d'Armée of Langeron, - - -	33,310	43	28	12	136	5	7
4. The Russian Corps d'Armée of Sacken, - - -	21,150	26	24	7	84	1	8
5. The fourth German or Hessian Corps d'Armée, - - -	20,000	25	12	4	32		
6. The fifth German or Duke of Coburg's Corps, - - -	24,000	20	11	5	40		3½
Grand Total, - - -	137,391	182½	163	55	508	10	18½

	Men.
Prussian troops, - - -	33,931
Russian troops, - - -	54,460
German Allied troops, - - -	44,000

Total, 137,391

—PLOTTO, iii. *Appendix*, p. 26.

IV. THE ARMY OF RESERVE.

	Men.	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Batteries.	Cannon.	Pioneer Companies.	Cossack Regiments.
1. Russian reserves under Benningsen,	50,000	63	74	12½	156	5	10
2. The fourth Prussian Corps d'Armée under Tauenzien, - - -	50,000	64	58	17½	100		
3. Prussian reserve Corps in Westphalia, under Prince Hesse-Homburg, - - -	20,000	21	12	2		1	
4. The Russian army of reserve under Prince Labanoff, - - -	80,000						
5. Blockading Corps before Glogau, -	15,000						
6. Austrian reserve under the Grand-duke of Würtemberg, - -	20,000						

Total of the Army of Reserve, 235,000 148 144 33 256 6 10
 —PLOTHO, iii. *Appendix*, pp. 41-50.

Summary of the whole Allied Armies.

	Men.
1. The Grand Army under Marshal Schwartzberg, - -	261,000
2. The army of Silesia under Marshal Blucher, - -	137,000
3. The army of the North under the Crown-Prince of Sweden, -	174,000
4. The Italian army under Marshal Bellegarde, - -	80,000
5. The army of reserve, - - -	235,000
Grand Total, - - -	887,000
Of which there were,—	
230,000 Germans, { In the first line, - -	210,000
{ In the second line, - -	20,000
278,000 Russians, { In the first line, - -	136,000
{ In the second line, - -	62,000
{ In the third line, - -	80,000
162,000 Prussians, { In the first line, - -	76,000
{ In reserve, - -	86,000
179,000 German Allied troops.	
20,000 Swedes.	

Total, 887,000

This does not include the Danish infantry, 10,000 strong.

—PLOTHO, iii. *Appendix*, p. 50.

Note D, page 51.

Composition and Strength of the French Army.

	Artillery.	Infantry.	Cavalry.
I. Guard under Marshal Mortier—			
1. Old Guard—			
One division of infantry under General Frenant,		6,000	
One division of cavalry under General Desnouettes, - - -			2,400
2. Young Guard—			
Infantry—Division Christiani, - - -		3,500	
.. —Division Rothenburg, - - -		6,000	
.. —Division Boildieu, - - -		6,000	
Carry forward, - - -		21,500	2,400

	Artillery.	Infantry.	Cavalry.
Brought forward,	-	-	-
Cavalry—Division Segur,	-	-	21,500
.. —Division Colbert,	-	-	2,400
.. —Division Nansouty,	-	-	1,600
II. Infantry—			1,600
The second corps, Victor,	-	-	8,000
The third corps, Ney,	-	-	8,000
The sixth corps, Marmont,	-	-	7,000
The seventh corps, Oudinot,	-	-	12,000
The eleventh corps, Macdonald,	-	-	7,000
The first reserve division, Charpentier,	-	-	3,000
The second reserve division, Laval, (from Spain,)	-	-	3,000
The third reserve division, Amey,	-	-	3,000
The fourth reserve division, Payol, (National Guard,)	-	-	3,000
III. Cavalry—			
The first corps, Grouchy,	-	-	3,000
The second corps, Sebastiani,	-	-	3,000
The fifth corps, Milhaud,	-	-	3,000
The eleventh corps, Excelmans,	-	-	3,000
Dragoon division, Briche, (from Spain,)	-	-	3,000
IV. Artillery under Drouot,	-	-	8,000
Grand Total,	8,000	75,500	22,200

Summary.

	Artillery.	Infantry.	Cavalry.
1. Guard—28, 700 men,	-	-	21,500
2. Infantry,	-	-	7,200
3. Cavalry,	-	-	54,000
4. Artillery,	-	-	15,000
Total,	8,000	75,500	22,200

Detached.

	Men.
1. The first Corps under Maison in Belgium,	20,000
2. The army of the South under Marshal Augereau at Lyons,	30,000
3. The thirteenth Corps under Marshal Davoust in Hamburg,	20,000
4. The army of Italy on the Adige, under Beauharnais,	50,000
5. The army of the Pyrenees and of Arragon, under Soult and Suchet,	90,000

I. Garrisons in France.

	Men.
1. Garrison of Besançon,	4,000
2. — of Auxonne,	3,500
3. — of Auxerre,	3,000
4. — of Mayence,	20,000
5. — of Strasburg,	10,000
6. — of Feltzberg,	1,500
7. — of Landau,	2,000
8. — of Befort,	3,000
9. — of Huningen,	4,000
10. — of Brisac,	1,500
11. — of Schelestadt,	2,000
12. — of Metz,	10,000
13. — of Thionville,	4,000
14. — of Luxemburg,	5,000
15. — of Sarre-Louis,	1,500
16. — of Toul,	3,000
17. — of Verdun	2,000
Total,	80,000

II. *Garrisons in Holland and the Netherlands.*

						Men.
1.	Garrison of Antwerp,	-	-	-	-	8,000
2.	— of Gorcum,	-	-	-	-	4,000
3.	— of Bergen-op-zoom,	-	-	-	-	5,000
4.	— of Maestricht,	-	-	-	-	3,000
5.	— of Flushing,	-	-	-	-	3,000
6.	— of Naerden,	-	-	-	-	2,000
7.	— of Luxemburg,	-	-	-	-	10,000
8.	— in Namur, Maubeuge, Valenciennes, Lille, and other places,	-	-	-	-	15,000
Total,						50,000

III. *Garrisons in Germany.*

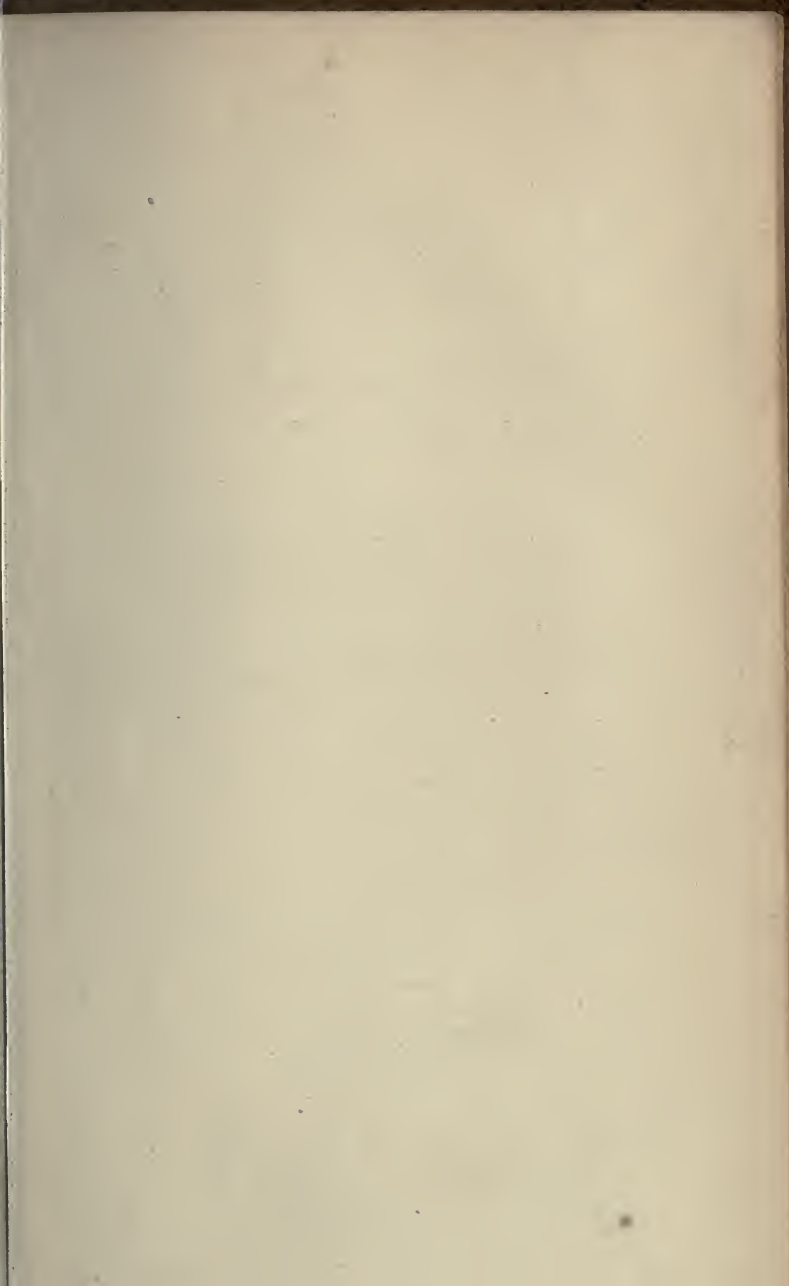
						Men.
1.	Garrison of Wesel,	-	-	-	-	10,000
2.	— of Marienburg,	-	-	-	-	1,500
3.	— of Petersberg,	-	-	-	-	2,000
4.	— of Cüstrin,	-	-	-	-	4,000
5.	— of Glogau,	-	-	-	-	10,000
6.	— of Wittenberg,	-	-	-	-	3,000
7.	— of Magdeburg,	-	-	-	-	20,000
Total,						50,500

General Summary.

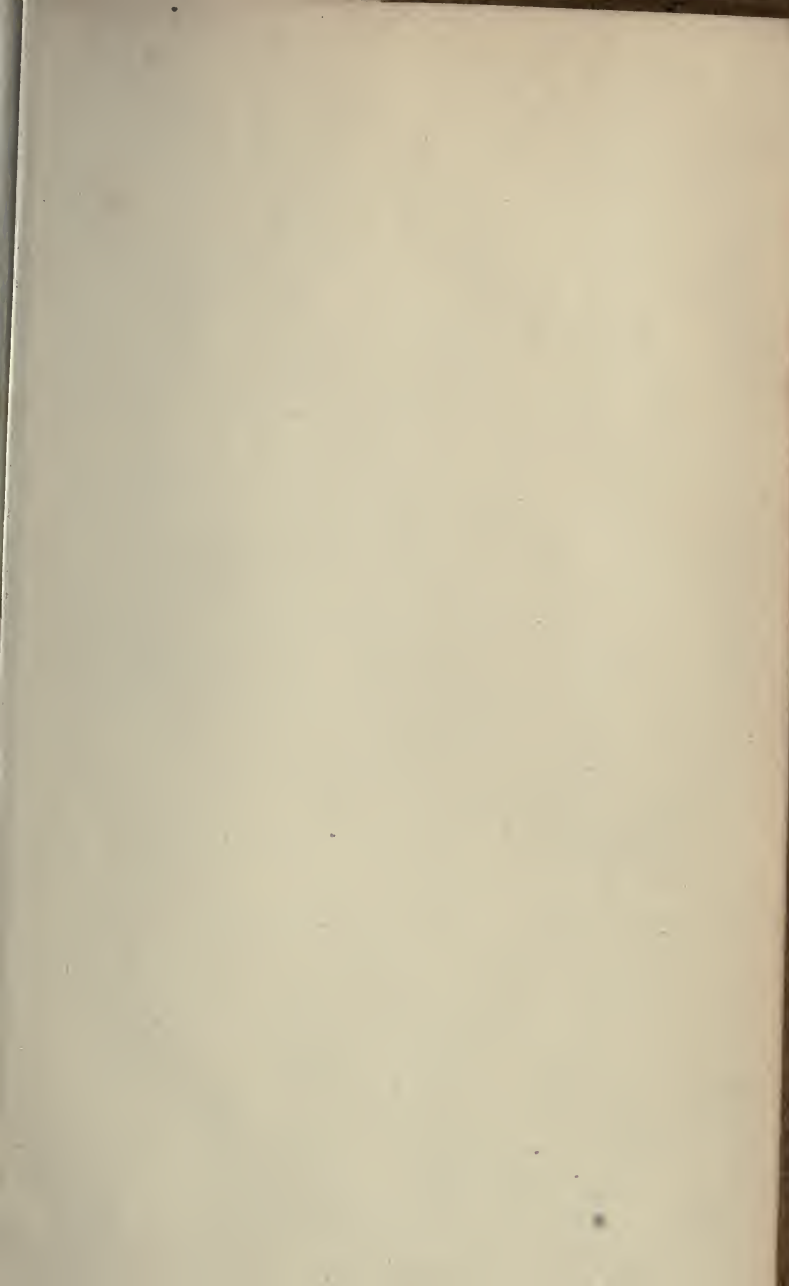
						Men.
I.	In France—					
	The Grand Army under Napoleon,	-	-	-	-	105,700
	The Army of the South under Augereau,	-	-	-	-	30,000
	The Army of the Pyrenees and of Arragon, under Soult and Suchet,	-	-	-	-	90,000
	Garrisons in France,	-	-	-	-	80,000
II.	In Holland and the Netherlands—					
	The first corps under Maison,	-	-	-	-	20,000
	Garrisons in Holland and the Netherlands,	-	-	-	-	50,000
III.	In Germany—					
	The thirteenth corps under Davoust,	-	-	-	-	20,000
	Garrisons in Germany,	-	-	-	-	50,500
IV.	In Italy—					
	The Army of Italy under Beauharnais,	-	-	-	-	50,000
Grand total of French forces,						496,200

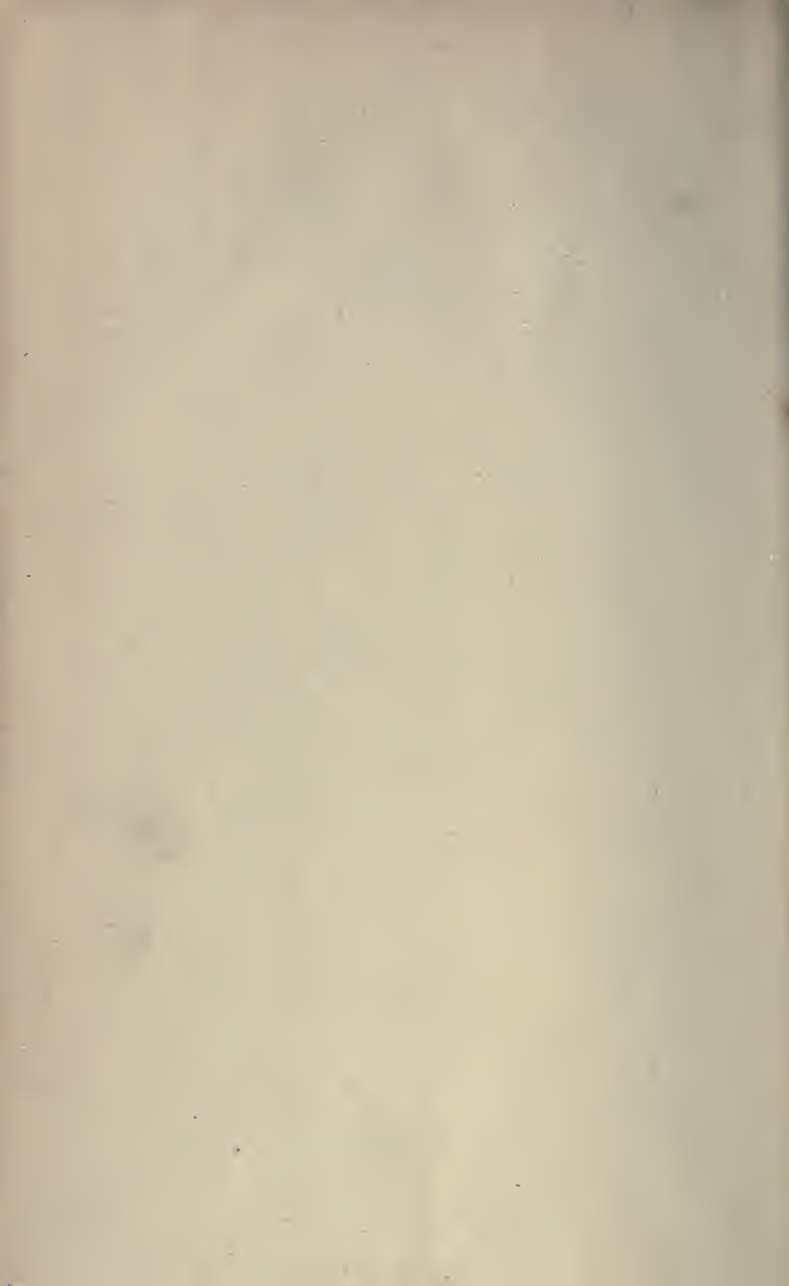
—PLOTTO, iii. *Appendix*, pp. 65, 68.

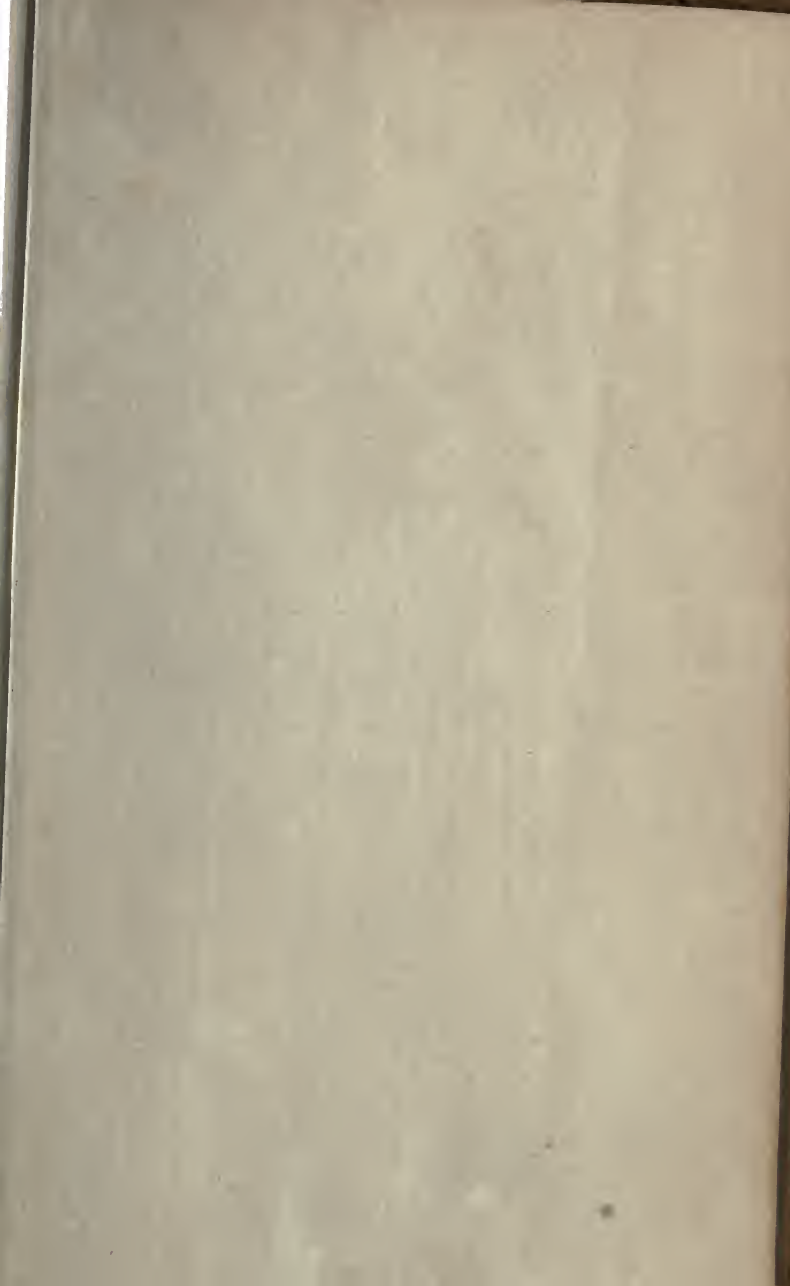
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